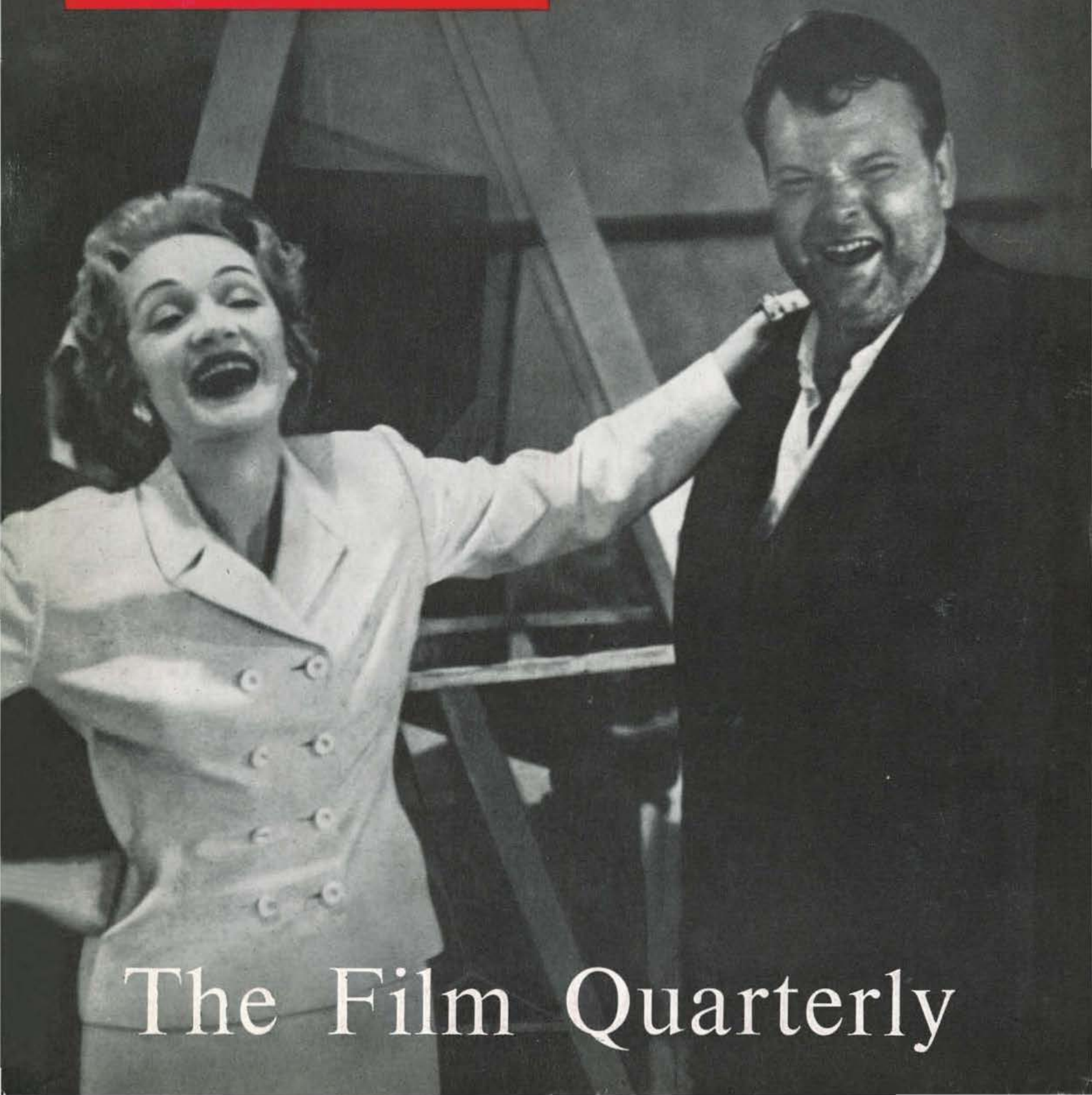


SUMMER 1958

Three Shillings and Sixpence

SIGHT AND SOUND



The Film Quarterly



THE NEW EXPLORERS

IN THIS FILM of the world exploration for oil no oil is found. It is not a success story. It makes no statement of facts and figures, but through the speech and work of many people in different countries, gives an impression of the tremendous effort and hazards met in oil exploration.

The film consists of a number of episodes shot in the Persian Gulf, Canada, Zanzibar, Papua, Trinidad and Sicily. In each location a different aspect of the story of the long search for oil unfolds.



A SERIES OF FILMS, sponsored by The British Petroleum Company, has been made to illustrate those chapters in the story of the oil industry which are of more popular interest.

All these films have been made to entertain as well as instruct and are already enjoying a wide distribution in many countries. They are available to any recognised organisation and include those of special interest to universities, schools, business and training colleges and also scientific societies. Although 'The New Explorers' is available *only in 16 mm. size*, most films can be obtained in 35 mm. as well, and details of the others can be obtained from the Petroleum Films Bureau from whom all 16 mm. films and selected 35 mm. films may be obtained free of charge.*



Sponsored by

THE BRITISH PETROLEUM COMPANY LIMITED

*PETROLEUM FILMS BUREAU, 29 NEW BOND STREET, W.1.

The British Film Institute
QUARTERLY GAZETTE
A Report on the Institute's Activities

No. 25

June, 1958

164 Shaftesbury Avenue, W.C.2

FILMS FROM THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

The following films have been added to the Distribution Library
during the last three months.

	Reels Sd./St.	Gauge mm.	Running Time
ART AND HISTORY OF THE FILM			
Bunny's Umbrella (John Bunny)	½ St.	16	—
Closing of Crystal Palace High Level Line	½ St.	16	—
Day on the River Oke. A	1 St.	16	—
Endurance	8 Sd.	16/35	—
Fleet Air Arm	1 St.	16	—
I Do (Harold Lloyd)	2 St.	16	—
Jour de Fête (Jaques Tati)	8 Sd.	16	—
"Jason, The" Regents Park Canal	½ St.	16	—
Menschen am Sonntag (People on Sunday) (English Titles)	6 Sd.	16/35	—
Never Weaken (Harold Lloyd)	2 St.	16	—
N.S.P.C.C. Film	1 Sd.	16	—
Out (U.N.O.)	3 Sd.	35	—
Shoulder Arms (Chaplin)	4 St.	16	—
Tramways of Amsterdam	½ St.	16	—
Vagabond, The (Chaplin)	2 St.	16	—
THE SCIENTIFIC LIBRARY			
Creative Play in Nursery Infants' School	2 St.	16	—
Dynamics of Experimental Neurosis	4 St.	16	—
Einstein's Theory of Relativity	2 St.	16	—
Genesis of Bacterial Flagella (Prof. Pijper)	1 St.	16	—
Introduction to Clinical Neurology, An	4 St.	16	—
Neurosis and Alcohol	2 St.	16	—
Some Aspects of the Role of Mental Function in Physical Activity (To be projected at silent speed)	3 Sd.	16	—
FILMS ON THE ARTS			
Autumn Spectrum	1 Sd.	16/Col.	—
Gyromorphosis	1 Sd.	16/Col.	—
FILMS FOR FILM SOCIETIES			
Bambini Ci Guardano	5 Sd.	16/35	—
Toccato for Toy Trains (Charles Eames)	2 Sd.	16/Col.	—
There Was A Door	3 Sd.	35	—
Those Blasted Kids (Pokkers Unger, De.)	9 Sd.	16/35	93

Please note that the following films have been transferred from the C.B.A. to the Art and History of the Film Section of the Distribution Library.

	Reels Sd./St.	Gauge mm.	Running Time
Citta Senza Tempo	1 Sd.	35	12
Incontri di un Giorno	1 St.	35	12
Son of The Sheik (Rudolf Valentino)	7 Sd.	35	—
Son of The Sheik (Rudolf Valentino)	7 Sd. & St.	16	—

The following films have been withdrawn:

Age d'Or, L'	6 Sd.	16	63
Brief Encounter (Extract)	1 Sd.	16	10
Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill (Extract)	1 Sd.	16	10
Nice Time	2 Sd.	16/35	19
Vipers, The	1 St.	16	10
When the Daltons Rode (Extract)	1 Sd.	16	10

The following films are now available on 8 mm.:

ART AND HISTORY OF THE FILM

Battleship "Potemkin"	5 St.	8	72
Cops	2 St.	8	28
General, The	8 St.	8	81
Shoulder Arms	4 St.	8	—

FILMS MADE BY CHILDREN

Noah and his Ark	1 St.	8/Col.	11
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THE BOOK LIBRARY

The following are among the books recently added to the Library of the Institute. (Those marked with an asterisk are available for loan to members.)

ALBERTI, Walter.—Il cinema di animazione. Rome, Edizioni radio Italiano, 1957.

ALLSOP, Kenneth.—The Angry Decade. London, Peter Owen, 1958.

*ARNHEIM, Rudolf.—Film as Art. London, Faber & Faber, 1958.

*BENCHLEY, Nathaniel.—Robert Benchley. London, Cassell, 1956.

BRUSENDORFF, Ove, and HENNINGSEN, Poul.—Erotik for millioner. Copenhagen, Thaning & Appel, 1957.

CHIARINI, Luigi. Panorama del cinema contemporaneo. Rome, Edizioni Bianco e Nero, 1957.

COCTEAU, Jean. My journey round the world. London, Peter Owen, 1958.

ENCICLOPEDIA DELLO SPETTACOLO, Volumes A-FAM.—Rome, Casa editrice le Maschere, 1954.

FERRARA, Giuseppe.—Il nuovo cinema Italiano. Florence, Felice le Monnier, 1957.

FLOGEL, Karl Friedrich.—Geschichte des grotesk-komischen. Munich, Georg Muller, 1914.

HECHT, Ben.—Charlie. New York, Harper, 1957.

*HOBSON, Harold.—Ralph Richardson. London, Rockliff, 1958.

*IDESTAM-ALMQUIST, Bengt.—Dramma e rinascita del cinema svedese. Rome, Bianco e Nero, 1954.

*KERSH, Gerald.—Fowlers End. London, Heinemann, 1958.

*LACLOS, Michel.—Le Fantastique au cinema. Paris, Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1958.

*NOBLE, Peter.—Reflected Glory. London, Jarrolds, 1958.

*SICLIER, Jacques.—La femme dans le cinema français. Paris, Les editions du Cerf, 1957.

*SPOTTISWOODE, Raymond and Nigel. Theory of stereoscopic transmission. London, Fountain Press, 1953.

*WILLIAMS, Rollo.—Lighting for colour and form. London, Sir Isaac Pitman, 1954.

LECTURE DATES

JULY, 1958

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Lecture</i>	<i>Lecturer</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Organisation</i>
2	2.00 and 7.30 p.m.	Music and the Film	John Huntley	Eastbourne Training College	Eastbourne Training College
5/6	Weekend Course for Youth Club Leaders	Film Appreciation	Charles Everett	St. Pierre, Monmouthshire	National Association of Boys' Clubs
8	6.15 p.m.	Acting for the Screen	John Huntley	Ministry of Supply Film Society	Ministry of Supply Film Society
9	8.00 p.m.	The Cinema Industry	Charles Everett	Church Hall, Pountney Road, Battersea	Battersea Townswomen's Guild and City of London Society
10	7.30 p.m.	The Cinema Industry	Charles Everett	Church Institute, Wiseton Road, S.W.17	Balham Evening Townswomen's Guild and City of London Society
8/9/10	10.00 a.m.	The Work of the Director: Film Subjects and People—Are they Real?	John Huntley and Paddy Whannel	National Film Theatre, South Bank	L.C.C. Education Department
14	2.15 p.m.	The Cinema: 1890-1960	Stanley Reed	Wanstead County High School	Wanstead County High School
15/16/17	10.00 a.m.	The Work of the Director: Film Subjects and People—Are they Real?	John Huntley and Paddy Whannel	National Film Theatre, South Bank	L.C.C. Education Department
16	10.30 and 2.00 p.m.	Acting for the Screen	David Kossoff	Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool	Merseyside Film Institute Society
15	11.30 and 5.00 p.m.	Film Appreciation: I and II	John Huntley	Belstead House, Ipswich	E. Suffolk County Education Committee
25-29	5-day High Level Course	Film Appreciation	Paddy Whannel, Stanley Reed, Roy Baker, Bryan Forbes, Peter John Dyer, Jacques Brunius	Nottinghamshire County Training College	Nottinghamshire Council Education Committee

AUGUST, 1958

British Film Institute's fifteenth annual residential Summer Film School will be held at HIGH LEIGH, a Conference Centre at Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, from August 9th-22nd. Morning lectures by staff tutors and visiting guest lecturers from the film industry, afternoon 16mm. film making and evening film programmes. Brochure and enrolment form from the Lecture Department, British Film Institute, 4 Great Russell Street, W.C.1. Inclusive fee: £20.

SEPTEMBER, 1958

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Lecture</i>	<i>Lecturer</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Organisation</i>
9	8.00 p.m.	The Advent of Sound in Motion Pictures	Charles Everett	Purley Hall, Purley	Purley Young Conservatives
16	6.30 p.m.	Film Fundamentals	Stanley Reed	University of Reading Institute of Education	University of Reading Institute of Education
17	2.00 p.m. and 8.00 p.m.	Shakespeare and the Cinema	Roger Manvell	Appleby Grammar School	Appleby Grammar School, Westmorland

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Lecture</i>	<i>Lecturer</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Organisation</i>
18	6.00 p.m.	Place of the Film in Education	David Johnston	National Film Theatre	L.C.C. Education Department
20	8.30 p.m.	Film Appreciation	John Huntley	King Alfred Training College	Hampshire Education Committee
23	6.30 p.m.	Film Fundamentals: Film Themes	Paddy Whannel	University of Reading Institute of Education	University of Reading Institute of Education
23	6.00 p.m.	Film Fundamentals: I	Stanley Reed	University of Bristol Institute of Education	University of Bristol Institute of Education
25	6.00 p.m.	Discussion Method in Film Appreciation	Paddy Whannel	National Film Theatre	L.C.C. Education Department
30	6.30 p.m.	Film as an Industry	Stanley Reed	University of Reading Institute of Education	University of Reading Institute of Education
30	6.00 p.m.	Film Fundamentals: II	Paddy Whannel	University of Bristol Institute of Education	University of Bristol Institute of Education

FILM COURSES

University of Reading Institute of Education Course of 8 sessions on Film Appreciation, for teachers, commencing on 16th September and ending on 4th November.

University of Bristol Institute of Education Course of 8 sessions on "Film and the Teacher", for teachers, commencing on 23rd September and ending on 18th November.

London County Council Course of 6 lectures for teachers by different speakers on Film Appreciation, commencing 18th September and ending 23rd October, at the National Film Theatre, South Bank. Enrolment through The Education Officer, County Hall, Westminster Bridge, S.E.1.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON LECTURE COURSES, WINTER 1958-9 (24 lectures each)

- | | | |
|-------|---|--|
| 1 & 2 | "THE ART OF THE FILM" | Basic first-year course on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7 p.m.
Tuesdays: Lecturer—John Huntley
Thursdays: Lecturer—A. D. Whannel
Commencing 23rd and 25th September. |
| 3 | "THE WORK OF SIR CAROL REED AND DAVID LEAN" | Advanced Course. Mondays at 6.30 p.m.
Lecturers: John Huntley, Stanley Reed, A. D. Whannel
Commencing 22nd September. |
| 4 | "THE FILM IN AMERICA" | Advanced Course. Fridays at 7 p.m.
Lecturers: John Huntley, Stanley Reed, A. D. Whannel
Commencing 26th September. |

Enrolment through the Lectures Officer, British Film Institute, 4 Great Russell Street, W.C.1, commencing in July.

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE
164 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.C.2
Telephone: COVENT GARDEN 2801

WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION
CONFERENCE ON THE FILM AND PLASTIC ARTS IN VENICE

The British Film Institute has been asked by the Ministry of Education to nominate six delegates to an international conference on the film, painting and the plastic arts to be held under the auspices of Western European Union in Venice between the 2nd and 8th September, during the last week of the XIX International Film Festival.

Fares to and from Venice will be paid by the British Government, and board and accommodation in Venice will be provided by the Italian Government.

Applications are invited from men who are British nationals and satisfy the following conditions:

- (a) Age between 18 and 24 years,
- (b) Possess a sufficiently good working knowledge of French to enable them to take part in discussion in that language,
- (c) Have a lively interest in the film in all its aspects, and
- (d) Have studied painting and the plastic arts.

Applicants should indicate briefly their reasons for wishing to attend the conference and should give evidence that they have the necessary qualifications.

Applications should be made in writing to the Director of the British Film Institute, 164 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.C.2, and should reach him not later than 17th July, 1958.



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All on 16 mm. Send for catalogue which contains complete list of films, descriptions, running times, etc.

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my name is dorothy whistler and I am your 4th programme

Because I am the Editor of *CLASSIC CLUB NEWS*, I am already well-known to the more discriminating members of Britain's L.P. buying public. *CLASSICS CLUB NEWS*, the monthly journal of *CLASSICS CLUB*, Britain's premier record club, has been described in the press

as "brilliant, witty, and provocative" (I blush); but despite my maiden modesty I must say that it really is quite good, that our records are superb, and our values unbeaten anywhere in the world.

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15/6 *Symphony No. 4*
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54. 12" MOZART
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A comprehensive course in professional film making at the **London School of Film Technique**

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1st TERM—9 WEEKS *Theory*

1. GENERAL

The Evolution of the Cinema.
The Cinema's Place in Society.
Elementary Analysis of Films.
Cinematographic Language.

2. PRODUCTION AND ADMINISTRATION

The Structure of Film Production and Distribution.
The Place of the Producer, Director and Scriptwriter.
Other Studio Personnel.
Organisation of Documentary and Location Shooting.
The Script as a Blueprint for Production.

3. SCRIPT AND DIRECTION

Script Treatment and the Shooting Script.
Breakdown of the Shooting Script.
Shooting Schedule.

4. CAMERA

Still Photography and its relationship with Cinematography.
Persistence of Vision.
Principles of Lighting.
The Mechanism of the Camera and Projector.
Principles of Composition and Movement within the frame.
Types of Lenses and their use.
Principles of Film Emulsions.
Light Meters and their use.
Principles of Film Make-up.

5. SOUND

Basic Principles of Sound Recording (Optical and Magnetic).
Types of Sound Recording Equipment and their uses.

6. EDITING

Basic Principles of Editing.

Practical Work

Care of Lenses: Care and Handling of Cameras and Projectors (16 mm. and 35 mm.); Projection and Presentation: Still Photography as an aid to Lighting and Composition: Elementary Studio and Location Lighting: Script writing exercises; Script Conferences for 16 mm. Production; Handling of Sound Equipment; Splicing and Film Joining; Use of Number Boards and Camera Sheets.

2nd TERM—8 WEEKS *Theory*

1. GENERAL

History of Feature Films.
History of Documentary Films.
Analysis of Feature, Documentary and Educational Film Principles.
Television Film Principles.

2. PRODUCTION AND ADMINISTRATION

Finance and Budgeting.
Comparison of Pre- and Post-Production Shooting Scripts.

3. SCRIPT AND DIRECTION

Analysis of Films as a Guide to Directors Technique.
Pace and Timing in relation to Dramatic Content.
The Director's Personal Interpretation of the Script.

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Cine lighting in the Studio and on Location.
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Lighting for Colour.

5. SOUND

The Creative use of Sound Recording Apparatus.
Sound Synchronisation.

6. EDITING

Editing from assembly to Release Print.

7. ART DIRECTION

Art Direction from Drawing Board to Studio Floor.

Practical Work

Production of complete 16 mm. Documentary Films on Location.
Editing and Sound Recording Exercises.
Studio and Location Lighting.
Exercises in Studio Production Procedure.
Script Conferences for the 35 mm. Production.

3rd TERM—9 WEEKS *Theory*

1. GENERAL

Present Trends and Future Development in the Cinema.
Detailed Technical Analysis of Films.
The British Film Institute.
Free Cinema.

2. PRODUCTION AND ADMINISTRATION

Post-Production Procedure.
Various Markets for the Finished Product.

3. SCRIPT AND DIRECTION

The Directors' Duties on Completion of Shooting.

4. CAMERA

Motion Picture Stocks and their characteristics.
Colour Temperature and Colour Photography.
Filters, Masks and Diffusion Discs.
Model Shots.
Back Projection; Split Screen; Travelling Mattes;
Dunning and Schufftan Processes.
Screen Dimension; Wide Screen; Cinemascope;
VistaVision; Todd A-O etc.

5. SOUND

Re-recording; Post-synchronising and Dubbing.
Music and Effects.

6. EDITING AND LABORATORY

Aesthetics of Sound and Picture Editing.
Negative Cutting, Grading, The Release Print.
Laboratory Work—Processing, Printing, Dissolves, Fades, Wipes, etc.
Titling.

Practical Work

Production of Complete 35 mm. Film in Studio.
Editing.
Sound Recording and Re-recording.

Shell Films

The Shell Film Unit was founded in 1933. Its documentary films are known throughout the world; more than 3,000 copies of current productions are distributed overseas annually.

The majority are revoiced in more than a dozen languages.

The Shell Film Library contains over 150 films covering not only every aspect of the oil industry but also many subjects directly or indirectly related to it.



Three recent productions

Song of the Clouds

A colour film about world civil aviation and the far-reaching organisation on which it depends.

Caracas

An English version of a film made by the Shell Film Unit in Venezuela about life in the capital of that country.

High Speed Flight—Part 1— Approaching the Speed of Sound

An introduction to the problems of high speed flight.



Shell films can be obtained on free loan by responsible organisations for showing to non-paying audiences in nearly every country in the world simply on application to the local Shell Company, or in Great Britain to the Petroleum Films Bureau, 29 New Bond Street, London, W.1.

SIGHT AND SOUND

The International Film Quarterly

VOLUME 27 No. 5 SUMMER 1958

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ON THE COVER: Marlene Dietrich and Orson Welles photographed on the set during the filming of Welles' *Touch of Evil*.

SIGHT AND SOUND is an independent critical magazine sponsored and published by the British Film Institute. It is not an organ for the expression of official British Film Institute policy; signed articles represent the views of their authors, and not necessarily those of the Editorial Board.

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THE FRONT PAGE

IN this issue of SIGHT AND SOUND we publish two articles about film-makers who work outside the usual industrial systems, experiencing the advantages of independence and the hazards of inadequate resources and uncertain distribution chances. Karel Reisz discusses the recent Experimental Film Festival at Brussels; Derek Hill writes about the amateur film movement in Britain. The subjects to some extent overlap; and they might perhaps overlap more than they do. A criticism made of the amateurs is that they are too often satisfied to imitate the professionals. Karel Reisz is equally critical of those 'symbol-happy' *avant-garde* extremists who hardly attempt to establish a contact with their audience. If the world of experimentalists and amateurs alike is largely so much unknown territory to the general public, the film-makers themselves are not entirely blameless.

But there were also important revelations at Brussels, just as there has been much worthwhile work done in the amateur field. Experiment does not only begin to become interesting when it penetrates the commercial strongholds. This type of film-making occupies for the cinema rather the place of the Little Magazines in literature: it is the testing ground, the area in which chances can be taken, the starting point for some talents and the field in which others prefer consistently to work. Its value to the industry at large is in the talents it uncovers and the styles it initiates. There was a good deal of pure 'experiment' about the British documentary movement of the 'thirties; and directors such as Clair, Carné, Renoir, Cocteau and Buñuel all began their careers with work more or less deliberately experimental. Whether regarded as an end in itself or as a stepping-stone in a creative film-maker's career, the experimental film should have the special quality of individuality which can so easily be lost in the industrial processes of film-making.

The important thing, in any case, is to keep alive the idea of experiment, to keep open opportunities for film-makers, whether outside or inside the industry, who want to pursue original, perhaps uncommercial ideas. In this country, the British Film Institute's Experimental Production Committee, under the chairmanship of Sir Michael Balcon, has for six years been trying to fulfil this function. Its initial resources consisted of a £12,500 grant from the British Film Production Fund. This money has now been spent, on a total of 15 completed pictures, and the Committee is financing such new productions as can be afforded out of distribution returns on its earlier films. It is, in fact, something of a shoe-string operation; and it has never been considered that film-making of this kind could contrive to be entirely self-supporting. To carry on at its present level of production, the Committee estimates its needs at a further £2,500 a year.

Looking at the films aided by this fund, one finds a fairly heterogeneous assortment of styles and ideas. Three films (*Together*, *Momma Don't Allow* and *Nice Time*) have been Free Cinema productions. There have been cartoons in varying styles (*A Short Vision*, *Indian Fantasy*, *13 Cantos of Hell*); several art films (*Rowlandson's England*, *Coventry Cathedral*, *The Vision of William Blake*); a film about

children's games (the Brussels prize-winner *One Potato, Two Potato*); a childhood fantasy (*Amelia and the Angel*), and a purely technical experiment (*Door in the Wall*).

Apart from *13 Cantos of Hell*, none of these films retreat into the mists of esotericism which are so often the experimental film-maker's refuge. They have been films well worth making, films in several cases winning prestige abroad through festival awards, and films most of which could not have been made without the fund's assistance. If the Committee's policy can be criticised, it is on the grounds that a policy, as such, is insufficiently apparent: it has encouraged a number of different artists, but has not generally been able to foster talent to the extent of giving second chances to the film-makers it has discovered. Nor has it commissioned experimental work on its own account.

It is easy to see why this is. The Committee has had to make a little money go a long way. It has existed to give encouragement and financial support rather than to establish any pattern of film-making. The contrast could be seen at Brussels when Britain's entry was set against that from Poland—which incidentally carried off the major festival award. The Polish productions came from film-makers attached to a school, working in a creative framework which does not yet exist in Britain. Their work stemmed from a policy, whereas in this country we rely on a sort of extension of the methods of 'amateurism' found equally in the field of sport.

If you subject experimental work to too much discipline, it loses individuality. But in the cinema the tools are too costly for 'do it yourself' film-making to afford the kind of opportunities needed. The Committee needs an extension of its resources, to give it greater freedom to manoeuvre, perhaps to initiate production as well as to support it. And there would be advantage in a closer contact between the different sections of film-making; the narrow bracketings of 'experimental' and 'amateur', and the separation of both from the normal commercial field, is in the long run damaging. As the *Manchester Guardian* film critic has said, "the industry cannot afford to disregard its experimenters."

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In October of this year, the British Film Institute celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary. SIGHT AND SOUND, founded a year before the Institute itself came into existence, has been published continuously since 1933 as the Institute's magazine. The double anniversary is a unique one; and to mark it the Autumn number of SIGHT AND SOUND will be a special issue, considerably larger than usual, and including such features as publication in full of a new film script and a comprehensive index to the work of contemporary British directors. This special number will be on sale on October 1st at the usual price of 3/6.

Readers who bind their copies of SIGHT AND SOUND will note that in answer to several requests we are revising our system of volume-numbering. The new volume will begin in the New Year, with the Winter 1958/59 issue.

In the Picture

Report from Japan

DEREK PROUSE has recently returned from Japan. He writes: "We work in a jungle," said Akira Kurosawa as we listened to the producers' traditional laments about costs and finishing dates. Smiling and imperturbable, Kurosawa himself betrays nothing of his own strength of will in obtaining exactly what he wants for his productions. In a crowded room he seems to stand apart; and there is no mistaking the enormous respect he commands, both as an artist and as a man. "A jungle," he smiles again; and after a tour of the six major Tokyo studios and two in Kyoto one begins to understand what he means.

In the peak production year of 1956, Japan made 514 films. Last year there were some fifty less and this year the figure is expected to fall again. This is generally interpreted as a good sign, since the present pace of work is too hectic for sustained quality. At Nikkatsu's palatial new studios eleven films were in production and not even Sundays were free. In Kyoto, Tadashi Imai, director of *Shadows in Sunlight*, was still editing and even shooting his latest film the day before it was set for release in several cities.

Called *Suzumi Drum in the Night*, this is Imai's first 'samurai' film, and is a disappointment. One finds no strong period response or relevant style in his treatment of this story about a faithless wife who is driven into a tightening web of intrigue to hide her guilt and is finally executed by her husband. Although he had been working night and day to finish his film, Imai seemed fresh and eager to talk; and he was the first to say that his talent lay mainly in portraying the modern scene and the contemporary problems of youth. Imai is extremely reluctant to visit Europe (as at first was Kurosawa) yet intensely eager to hear European views on Japanese films. He has never left Japan: "perhaps one day I might get as far as India..." he ventures.

Among actors and directors alike, one finds a diffidence which seems to betoken a rare creative modesty. "Did the Japanese films strike me as terribly slow?" was the question I was asked everywhere. The globe-trotting producers have brought back this general criticism from abroad, with no specific indications of where any basic fault may lie. I tell Imai that we in London find that certain films, such as *Tokyo Story*, are right to adopt their leisurely tempo, since no other tempo could so effectively tell the story. Slowness, to us, in fact more often means a fault in scenario construction, or needless repetition. Imai agrees, adding that there is seldom time to rewrite or tighten. "Do you think, maybe, it also has something to do with the fact that we take so long coming in and going out of Japanese rooms?" he adds, half-seriously.

The release date for Imai's next picture was already set for some two months ahead. "You resist all you can and demand more time, but suddenly the date is fixed and there's nothing to be done except meet it." This sort of pressure is met everywhere. A leading young contract actor at Toei told me that he had played in 32 films in thirty months. Isuzu Yamada was working in three films at once—one of them being made in Kyoto, an eight hour train journey from Tokyo.

Toei, the largest production company and the biggest money-maker, has a well-defined production policy. Many of their 'samurai' films are made at their Kyoto studio—where the atmosphere is relaxed and friendly in spite of their alarming production schedule. The studio lot is bounded by the wall of the next door temple; this is rented by Toei, and a superb permanent exterior set of a castle and moat stand close by. "We'll have to change

it soon," says the production chief. "Even the children are starting to recognise it; they call it Toei Castle." Toei's 'samurai' pictures are enormously successful and pay for their more ambitious 'art' films. But this is an accepted part of the company's policy. Toei have also just installed their first animation studio and are working on a feature length cartoon.

Some Japanese production costs may be worth mentioning. A major film by a top director may cost £100,000, but the majority of productions cost around £10,000. A star may earn £3,000 for a picture; extras are paid 10/- or 6/- a day. Stars are not supplied with stand-ins or doubles: they endure the long camera rehearsals themselves and it seems a point of honour for an actor personally to perform even the most arduous aspects of his role. Dedication to their art, indeed, can lead to considerable personal sacrifices. Tanaka Kinoyo (*Four Chimneys*) was barely recognisable on the set of Kinoshita's new film. Her role was that of an old woman in a mountainous region of central Japan, where the meagre yield of the land is insufficient to support the community and the old people are sent into the mountains to die. For her role, the actress had reduced to haggard proportions, as well as having four front teeth removed. Shooting in wide screen and colour in a fine studio forest set, Kinoshita was experimenting with Kabuki-staging devices for changes of scene. A scene was shot within a hut, which then slid sideways revealing the forest clearing behind and a village festival in progress.

As yet, television has been only the mildest threat to the cinema in Japan. Although the sale of TV sets is now rising steeply, it is still not viewed with much alarm. The Japanese are strongly addicted to going out for their entertainment, and the cinema plays a powerful role in society up and down the country. Traditional themes are remade almost annually to consistent approval. The latest version of the famous *47 Ronin* story, in colour and wide screen, is fast-moving and violent; the audience clearly knows every twist in the story, but this tale of honour violently redeemed and the subsequent calm self-sacrifice by the avengers never fails to command a whole-hearted response. To the themes of the rest of the world also the Japanese bring a lively appreciation. I heard the advent of the Japanese cinema ascribed to the animal caricature scroll by the Priest Toba Sojo in the 12th century; be that as it may, Japan is certainly a nation with the cinema in its blood.



Elsa Lanchester, Jack Lemmon and Kim Novak as the three witches in "Bell, Book and Candle", adapted from John van Druten's stage comedy and directed by Richard Quine.

Wider Yet and Wider

NOW THAT FOUR or five cinemas in the West End of London are behaving like theatres, with booked seats, separate houses, and a special emphasis on the "reality" of the things seen—"you are in the show . . .", "breaking the illusion barrier between shadow and reality . . ." says the publicity—readers may be interested in a refresher course on the three newest large screen systems to be presented here.

Already familiar are Cinestage (*Around the World in Eighty Days*), VistaVision (*The Ten Commandments*), and Cinerama. Todd-AO arrived in April with *South Pacific*. Adapted by American Optics from an idea by Mike Todd, this uses a 65 mm. film—although, to allow for the sound track, the negative at the Dominion is 70 mm. The camera has four lenses, interchangeable, of which the largest, the "bug-eye", covers an angle of vision of 128°. The deep curved screen has a special pearl-like surface for the maximum reflection of light, and an aspect ratio of 2.2 : 1. There are five loudspeakers spaced along the top of the screen for stereophonic effect.

M-G-M Camera 65 (*Raintree County*) also uses a 65 mm. film but is adaptable to any cinema screen now in use. In general effect it resembles VistaVision—with an aspect ratio of 3 : 1 (or, if necessary, 2.55 : 1 and 1.3 : 1)—and it is claimed that there is an improved image with less distortion than in its cousin system.

Cinemiracle (*Windjammer*), thrown on "the largest free-standing screen in the world", uses a triple-unit camera and three projectors interlocked in the projection booth, each of which covers one third of the screen. The 35 mm. film runs through a camera with a 146° angle of coverage and by means of partial blending at the margins and shooting into mirrors for the side images, instead of, as before, directly at the object photographed, the curving of horizontal lines at the edges of the three pictures is said to be eliminated.

Here, for the record, is a short list of some other new systems now in use: Cinepanoramic, Circarama, Eidophor, Filmorama, Naturama, Panavision, Polyvision, Super-Vistarama, Technirama and Thrillarama.

Warsaw Notes

BOLESŁAW MICHAŁEK writes: The spring of 1958 provided one of the most brilliant film seasons this country has seen. During April alone, for instance, Warsaw cinemas—there are some fifty of these, incidentally, not twenty as reported by Gene Moskowitz in *SIGHT AND SOUND*—were showing *Il Bidone*, *Casque d'Or*, *The Forty-First*, *French Cancan*, *Gervaise*, *Moulin Rouge*, *Notti di Cabiria*, *Oro di Napoli* and *Richard III*. This appears to be the result of the efforts of the newly-created advisory Film Selection Committee, made up of critics, exhibitors and film-makers.

Of the new Polish productions, two are particularly worth mentioning. First Andrzej Munk's *Eroica*, scripted by J. A. Stawinski, which comprises two stories about heroism. One concerns a likeable rogue who accidentally becomes a hero during the Warsaw uprising—a story told with great sarcasm and packed with psychological and dramatic paradoxes. The second deals with a prisoner of war camp and an 'escaped' officer, who is really hiding inside the camp but provides the prisoners with their essential 'hero-myth'. Munk has treated the film with cold authenticity in his characteristic semi-documentary style, courageously attacking traditional Polish (and perhaps not only Polish) concepts of heroism.

The other film is *The Noose* (*Petla*), the work of a new director, Wojciech Has. Based on a cruel short story by Marek Hlasko about a drunkard, the picture departs from this original in omitting the elements of physical brutality in the drunkard's progress through the streets. The neurotic hero finds himself wandering about an unreal, Kafka-esque town in which every minute event and every gesture assumes an unexpected significance. Even if one disagrees with the film's sometimes anachronistic idiom, it is impossible to ignore the presence of a strong, new and technically mature talent at work.

British Film Industry, 1958

IN 1952, AS the result of an initial suggestion from the British Film Institute, P.E.P. (Political and Economic Planning) published a comprehensive report on the structure and economics of the British film industry. Events of the last few years have now left this Report out of date, and P.E.P. (again with the Institute's co-operation) have just published a booklet providing statistical information and up-to-date analysis of the facts of the industry's present situation. This booklet, titled *The British Film Industry, 1958*, will be reviewed in the next issue of *SIGHT AND SOUND*.



Claude Autant-Lara and Gérard Philipe on the set of "Le Joueur", directed by Autant-Lara and adapted from Dostoevsky's "The Gambler".

Work in Progress

Great Britain

ANTHONY ASQUITH: *The Doctor's Dilemma*, an adaptation of the Shaw play with Leslie Caron, Dirk Bogarde and Alastair Sim. (Comet for M.G.M. release.)

RUDOLPH CARTIER: the first film from this TV director is *The Passionate Summer*, set in the West Indies and adapted from Richard Mason's novel *The Shadow and the Peak*. With Virginia McKenna, Bill Travers and Yvonne Mitchell. (Rank.)

CHARLES CRICHTON: *The Floods of Fear*, thriller about a river in flood and an escaped convict, with Howard Keel and Anne Heywood. (Rank.)

ROBERT HAMER: *The Scapegoat*, from the novel by Daphne du Maurier about a man who takes over another's identity. With Alec Guinness and Bette Davis. (Ealing for M.G.M. release.)

ALEXANDER MACKENDRICK: *The Devil's Disciple*, another Shavian adaptation, with Laurence Olivier, Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas. (Hecht-Hill-Lancaster.)

MARK ROBSON: *The Inn of the Sixth Happiness*, story about a woman missionary in China, with Ingrid Bergman, Curt Jurgens and Robert Donat. Location shooting in North Wales; studio shooting at Elstree involving the construction of a Chinese village. (Fox.)

U.S.A.

STANLEY DONEN: *Damn Yankees*, adaptation of the stage musical about baseball, with Tab Hunter, Gwen Verdon and Ray Walston. (Warner.)

STANLEY KRAMER: *The Defiant Ones*, story of two convicts, white and Negro, who break gaol in the deep South. With Tony Curtis and Sidney Poitier. (Kramer for United Artists release.)

ANATOLE LITVAK: *The Journey*, a story about the Hungarian uprising, with Yul Brynner and Deborah Kerr. (M.G.M.)

SIDNEY LUMET: *Orpheus Descending*, adaptation of a Tennessee Williams play, with Anna Magnani and Anthony Franciosa.

VINCENTE MINNELLI: *The Reluctant Debutante*, from the stage comedy by William Douglas Home, with Rex Harrison and Kay Kendall. (M.G.M.)

Also in production: *Monster in the Night*, *Monster from Galaxy 27*, *I Married a Monster from Outer Space* and *How to Make a Monster*.

interview with

CARL FOREMAN

recorded by PENELOPE HOUSTON
and KENNETH CAVANDER



CARL FOREMAN was one of Hollywood's best-known scriptwriters when he came to England six years ago as a victim of McCarthyism. He has now completed his first entirely independent production, "The Key," directed by Sir Carol Reed. This also carries his first screen credit as a writer since "High Noon," and begins a series of productions which he intends to make with his own company, Open Road Films.

After a struggle involving several lean years on the fringes of the film industry, Carl Foreman won a scholarship for a screen-writing course where his instructor was Dore Scharly. He broke into pictures just before the war as co-writer of a film for Sam Katzman designed to bring together Bela Lugosi and the Bowery Boys. Its title was "Spooks Run Wild," and the two writers shared a fee of 425 dollars for their work. Foreman's war service was partly spent as a writer with a service film unit, working on Frank Capra's celebrated "Why We Fight" series. By 1947 he had met Stanley Kramer; and the partnership that began with "So This is New York" continued through "Champion," "Home of the Brave," "The Men," "Cyrano de Bergerac" and, finally, "High Noon."

On a Wednesday afternoon in the third week of May, we went with a tape-recorder to the MGM studios at Elstree where, a week before "The Key" was due to be shown to the press, Mr. Foreman was putting the finishing touches to his film. In spite of the threatening deadlines, he kindly gave us two hours of his time to record his answers to various questions we put to him. We publish the result, abridged but otherwise unaltered. . . .

About the time that you began work on "The Key," you were quoted as saying that there were close links between this subject and "High Noon," the last film on which you had a screen credit. That they were both studies in fear. . . .

High Noon was, on my part anyway, an investigation of fear as it affected the community rather than any one individual. If you think back in terms of the political atmosphere in America at that time (and a certain amount of this affected me, as you know), it very naturally became of great interest to me. In *High Noon* I deliberately chose extremely familiar materials with which to tell the story. I chose a Western. It seemed to me that I could best tell the story with those familiar materials; and with luck perhaps invest them with something a little better, more important. Anyway, having then become intrigued with the subject of fear, I began to feel that we are all of us surrounded by fears from the very day of our birth. From infancy we all try anxiously to forget the terrors that always do face us, the fears our parents coped with and the ones we had to cope with on our own; we all remember how afraid we were the first day at school. As we come into adulthood we are faced with other fears, which we again smother because everyone else seems to be smothering theirs, and we go on making a living and becoming parents ourselves and pretending to each other that we are not afraid. We gradually develop a facade of one kind or another, all the way through life.

The other feeling I have is that it is not so much a question of physical fear as we grow into maturity, or try to grow into maturity, but of other fears that very much affect our way of life, our thinking, and in too many instances force us into compromises and retreats which are unnecessary—if we had the courage, the confidence, the belief in ourselves. This affects communities as well as individuals; it's almost a natural law of existence. The problem for the individual, then, is how to cope with these fears. Having, in *High Noon*, investigated fear in a community, I then became interested in going further with it. I became more or less obsessed with the idea. An individual betraying himself through fear. That had not been developed in *High Noon* at all.

But "High Noon" is as much a study of courage as of fear. Exactly, yes. The courage, in this instance, of the individual.

And in "The Key" he betrays himself—and the girl—through fear?

Exactly. In the case of *The Key* I deliberately chose very familiar material once more. The challenge is whether or not it will come off, just as with *High Noon* the challenge was whether audiences would accept a Western that wasn't on the good old traditional lines. In *The Key* we apparently make a service picture. It has the marks of a typical service picture. But it's *not* a service picture: it suddenly goes off-beam; it changes direction; it approaches dangerously close (I would say if I were a reviewer) to every cliché there has ever been in this kind of film. And then it side-steps it—at least I hope so. But this is not a deliberate tactic. It only becomes deliberate when you get into it and say 'These are the materials I'm working with and how do I avoid falling into traps like that?' *The Key* isn't about the war at all—the war is only a background.

Do you think there's a risk that people have become so used to war films that there is now a resistance building up—at least among the press—to war subjects as such?

Very much so, and I'm very depressed by the fact that since starting to make the film, over a year ago now, there have been such a number of important war films. Everyone's making them. Every time one comes along I wonder what will happen. . . . Personally, I don't know whether the cycle will continue or not. I think that people are going to these films partly because they look back into the past, which is much clearer than the present or future. The issues certainly are clearer. The violence, I escape. .

And do you think this was a time when people felt that they really lived . . . ?

As war always does, it brings gallantry, nobility, decency, a kind of grandeur and charity along with the terrible horrors. And one can forget the horrors and think only of these things. It would be wonderful if society could manage to inspire all those good things without the expense of going to war about it. . . . But from the writer's standpoint there's the problem

of what to write about. When we were younger, you see, things were much clearer too—back in the 'thirties. Then it was Fascism *versus* Democracy, so we knew where we were going. We knew what we believed in. Then came the war and the post-war world and the promises haven't turned out that way. We're living at a time of great fear and great confusion, a time when all our values have been shot to pieces. People of my generation find themselves lost, particularly if they had a left of centre orientation. It's not a question of being afraid to write about something so-called controversial. It's a question of what you write about with conviction. That's certainly my problem. It's aggravated by the fact that although I've lived in England for six years, and feel very much at home here, I don't feel qualified—yet—to comment on contemporary life.

Do you find it difficult as an American here? Could you say "This is an issue in Britain that I would like to write about, but as an American it's remote from me?"

Again, it's easy to say 'I'm an outsider. . . .' But very quickly, offhand. . . . Changes in the social structure, even in the six years I've been here, are fascinating. The influx of colonials—not only Jamaicans and West Indians—into the Mother Country and the problems that they meet there. And industry here has its problems; it's a wonderful field of exploration for films. England itself is standing at the cross-roads in so many ways. I think that if I were English I should find many things to write about.

When I was in America I was overflowing with ideas for films that I thought would be alive and contemporary . . . However, that was Foreman as an American, using his right to comment in films about American life as he saw it. When I first came here I was really too full of rage and fear—mostly rage, I'd been through the fear part and that was no longer very important—too full to worry about anyone else. Then I also feel that I should accept the hospitality that's been given me and do my best to make what I consider worthwhile films if I can. . . . Maybe after ten years I say, 'Yes, I am a part of the community,' and have a right to comment after making some contribution.



Studies in fear: left: "High Noon"; right: "Home of the Brave".

But the sort of themes that concern you as a film-maker are the public issues?

Yes. If I could get involved in a nice story about a boy and a dog I'd make it—but could I get involved? I had to get this question of fear out of my system, and that's why *The Key* is a sequel to *High Noon*, because emotionally it's bound up with it. *High Noon*, as you gather, was something of a milestone for me. It was then that for the first time I began to feel I was coming close to understanding what I was doing. While I knew I still had a great deal to learn as a film-writer, I had greater confidence. I thought I was getting closer to doing what I was doing consciously. And I found out something about myself in the making of the film. I'd always been terribly concerned with Theme. All writers approach their films and stories in different ways. Some begin with character or incident; with me the theme has always been the essence. So the theme had to be one that was important to me emotionally and intellectually and otherwise. I've always looked for what I thought were worthwhile themes, because I believe that the film-maker has great responsibility to his audience—first to himself and then to his audience. Unless he leaves the audience with a residue of something to carry away, something worthwhile, he is not completely fulfilling his function.

But I realised at that time, back in 1951, that I had always had only one theme and that I'd been working on two levels: the ostensible level, the theme on which I shaped my story, and an underlying theme which I hadn't known about. But I've only one thing to say really, one basic theme. I'm involved with the struggle of the individual against a society that for one reason or another is hostile. When I say society, I'm not thinking in terms of economic and political organisation, but simply the mass. It seems to me that there is a constant struggle going on between the individual and the mass—that there *must* be such a struggle. Sometimes it's a struggle for dignity, sometimes for fulfilment, but the struggle continues. The mass can't help but move in on the individual. At the same time, if the individual is going to contribute anything constructive to the society, he must have that freedom of dignity; he has to have a kind of spiritual *lebensraum*. I think this is very much inherent in *The Key*, where you have the individual against the background of war and that is the society. I don't want to be anti-social, but don't over-social me. . .

And you feel that any film you make will be more or less about that?

In one way or another. It may be that as I change my approach may change. But at the moment I'm obsessed with making films. I've no hobbies—don't play golf or anything—and I'd rather be at the studio than anywhere else. This may be partly because I had a very hard time getting into films; I remember I felt in earlier days that I was losing much valuable time, that the world was just passing me by.

Have you also felt that during the last few years?

To a degree, because while I was active in various ways it was at what I would call a purely professional level rather than an involvement. People would come to me and say, 'Would you fix this?' And then one goes in just like a play-doctor. The only interest is whether it works on its own level. It's not yours, a little thing that you've shaped with your own hands.

Although you worked so closely with Stanley Kramer, "The Key" is in fact the first film on which you have a production credit?

Yes. *High Noon*, however, was entirely my responsibility, my own picture. But in the event what happened was that the political thing blew up and it was decided that it would save the picture at the box-office to eliminate my identification with it. That was my first experience of being

fully responsible, but having been on the set all the time, and involved with Zinnemann and Robson when we worked together before, I was pretty well blooded by that time.

So "The Key" wasn't something entirely new?

No, no; it was a question of remembering a lot of things I had forgotten and also a question of spreading myself. It's very hard for me to delegate, in certain areas, and I feel a great responsibility to the people who put up the money. *The Key* is a very expensive and big operation, you know. It was six months in the making; *High Noon* was only thirty-three days.

Do you think that this sort of big picture is economically the answer to the industry's problems?

I don't think it's necessarily the answer. What I do think is that there is no middle ground, budget-wise, today. It's either big or small. I would prefer to be on the small side myself. I would be more at home on the small side.

Could "The Key" have been made as a smaller picture?

I think it could have been made for less money but not as a small picture, at least not if one wanted to have the physical background of the war in it.

And as a producer, after making this film, what do you feel about the division of the producer's and director's functions?

Well, by and large, one person must dominate a film. Who that is depends on who *he* is and what the film is. Sometimes it's the producer, sometimes the director, very rarely the writer. And I would think there must be someone, ideally, who sets out to make a film, *his* film. I suppose that I will probably always be frustrated until the time comes when I direct a film and get *that* out of my system. Because, though I've worked closely and very amicably with directors, there is always a 5 per cent area of no-man's land where no two minds meet. The question of who is right or wrong is not the issue—there's bound to be this divergence of opinion. If you have rehearsals, all these things can be ironed out one way or another; if you're doing a scene which hasn't had much rehearsal it can be difficult. And there is always the pressure of time, and time is money. However, although both Carol and I are strong-willed people, our relationship was a very good one throughout the picture. Ideally, Carol might have been happier entirely alone, and I might have been happier if I had been directing; but we made the effort—let's put it this way—because we have great respect for each other. *The Key* was a difficult picture and we were very happy to have each other. It was a very smooth production.

Why is it that you haven't yet directed yourself?

Well, I originally intended to direct *High Noon*. It was something I had always wanted to do. After all, if you want to be a film-maker you had just better well make it, that's all . . . But when Zinnemann wanted to do *High Noon* then I, as producer, had to evaluate Zinnemann against an unknown director named Foreman. I thought, 'All right, the next one . . .' But there was no next one.

Would you say that at that time in Hollywood, with the kind of realistic pictures you and Kramer and others were making, something was developing that McCarthyism killed off?

I don't know. I think perhaps that has been exaggerated. But obviously, a great many awfully good writers were eliminated from the American screen . . . I thought even then that the whole business of McCarthyism was a temporary aberration, unpleasant as it was and harmful as it was for the nation itself, for the world, for the people in the industry. But it couldn't last. It was brought about by fear. The American people were terribly afraid—with certain grounds for being afraid—and they were willing to resort to Draconic



Carol Reed and Carl Foreman on location for "The Key".

measures for the greater good of the greater community. So some had to go.' But I think the situation has greatly improved and will continue to improve. I would naturally like to see a great many people come back, and I hope they haven't been hurt too much by the going into the shadows. Because it's very difficult, I know, for a writer to be uprooted. It's a big psychological thing to cope with, and the worst enemy, of course, is a combination of self-pity and rage. It inhibits you: you get too involved in your own problems and forget that you are part of a greater canvas.

. . . . I'll talk about myself as a writer for a minute. I'm not a professional, at least, that is how I feel about myself. The professional attitude has always seemed to me 'give me a job and I'll do it'. But I know that I have never done as well with a piece of work that didn't involve me emotionally. Given a studio assignment, something I didn't care about, I could turn out a pretty dull job. The only times I've been lucky have been when I got caught up in what I was doing. But I still feel that I have much to learn and that—from my own point of view—there are great holes in my work. I don't feel that I have ever done well with women characters: my stories are all about men, and it's the man who's involved in the conflict. Incidentally there are no villains in my stuff: the "heavy" is always the mass or the environment, never a personal "heavy". There are conflicts between individuals, but these conflicts will always be expressions of larger issues.

About dialogue. I've always tried to write with an ear to the way people really talk—and the way people talk is on the

whole not witty, or fluent, or even expressive. We communicate by looks, by grunts, by sighs and squeals, and so forth. I've tried to be faithful that way, and it does seem to me that sometimes it is very dull. On the other hand, I have a reaction against very smart, bright dialogue. It's all right for a comedy, of course, but it often seems to me unreal, false. I suppose that is one of the reasons I love to hear rehearsals so much. I love to hear the actors say the words before we start shooting, and very often I find that there are vast areas for improvement.

Someone once said of you that you were one of the few writers whose screenplay you could just take and shoot.

I don't believe that. I know that it's said, and the truth in it is that I write a screenplay as completely as possible. It could be shot that way—but would it be good? I write it terribly completely, not so much in terms of shots, because that is something one can't plan, but in terms certainly of master-scenes. You could see the whole picture practically cut for cut if you were experienced; you would know when to come in for the close-up because that is perfectly obvious.

But reality is not the script. You start rehearsing and suddenly you find that there is some unexpected block, that the walk across the room from the mirror takes a little longer than you thought, and you have to do something about that and may change your entire scene. I'd be willing to rewrite an entire script, to fit reality to the background, just so

(Continued on page 264)

Wer immer strebend sich bemüht,
Den können wir erlösen.—
The Angels in Goethe's "Faust"

ERIK ULRICHSEN



**Ingmar
Bergman**



**and the
Devil**

It seems only yesterday that we were calling him the *enfant terrible* of the Swedish cinema and criticising his films for being immature, apparently for ever bogged down in the problems of puberty. Perhaps it is characteristic of the Nordic artist that he is slow to mature (and sometimes never does). In any case, although Ingmar Bergman's talent was obvious from the beginning, he has developed by way of so many detours and cul-de-sacs that now and then one has felt tempted to give him up. And it is greatly to the credit of Carl Anders Dymling, of Svensk Filmindustri, that he did not give him up. Bergman's career illustrates the value of a far-sighted producer who is wise enough to allow for experiments and mistakes in the belief that the talented director will learn from them.

Bergman is now forty (on July 14), and the faults of his most recent films are not primarily due to immaturity. No longer does the director identify himself directly and without detachment with his worried young men; and the pious boys in *Smiles of a Summer Night* and *Wild Strawberries* are, I think, caricatures of the young Bergman.

Ingmar Bergman's work is at once terribly Swedish and terribly personal. In his films, an exceptionally sensitive and highly-strung personality high-lights typically Swedish problems.

1

The 'forties were a hectic, experimental, sometimes hysterical period in Swedish literature. A group of writers found their main themes in different aspects of *Angst*. Their works had a paradoxical connection with the fact that during the war Sweden was a neutral country. A sort of 'neutrality complex' bothered the Swedes; and perhaps a certain masochism was a kind of 'moral compensation' for not fighting Hitler. The suicide of the playwright Stig Dagerman tells us something about the literary climate in Sweden during these years. And in several of Bergman's films—particularly *Fängelse (Prison)* in which one of the characters is a poet—we find reflections of this pessimism of the 'forties.

Older traditions have influenced Bergman, notably the plays of Strindberg. The demoniacal element in Strindberg appeals to Bergman and he has produced his plays in the theatre. In contrast to these traditions—or as a complementary aspect of them—is the love of nature, the search for purity, moral beauty and belief that can be found so often in Swedish art—in, for instance, Pär Lagerkvist's novel *Barabbas* and in Sucksdorff's films. Sometimes, as in Molander and Bergman's film *Eva*, these elements degenerate into naive puritanism.

The Christian faith (and doubt) is a part of Bergman's world. His father is a pastor and his upbringing was severe. Once he broke with his family, and several times during his youth he isolated himself in Stockholm's Gamla Stan, the old quarter of the city. I once asked him if he did this in order to study the milieu, but he said no. "At that time everything revolved around myself and my crises. Only later [in *Fängelse*] did I use some of my experiences."

This was in the late 'thirties. Bergman studied literature and art at the university of Stockholm and began directing plays with amateurs. In 1942 he produced his own first play with a student cast, and a year later he directed Kaj Munk's anti-Nazi play *Niels Ebbesen* for a professional theatre. Since then, he has continued to work regularly for the theatre—in Hälsingborg, Göteborg, Stockholm and Malmö, where he is now artistic director of the city's beautiful modern theatre. On the stage he has produced Camus, Ibsen, Pirandello, Molière and his own brutal play *The Murder in Barjärna*. As a theatre director, he is almost always interesting and inventive; his own plays, however, are unremarkable.

In 1944 Alf Sjöberg made *Hets (Frenzy)* from Bergman's first film script, and the second international epoch of the Swedish cinema had begun. Although Sjöberg had done some interesting work in the early 'forties, *Frenzy* was a turning point, a production which gave the Swedish film-makers self-confidence. In it, the world is seen through the eyes of an adolescent, Jan-Erik. Unhappy at school, where he is terrorised by the sadistic Latin master "Caligula", he falls in love with Bertha, a shop-girl; too late, he realises that she is another of "Caligula's" victims. One day Jan-Erik finds her dead. "Caligula" is in the apartment. Bertha has had a heart attack after drinking too much. Later, "Caligula" explains his presence: he knew about Jan-Erik and Bertha and wanted to stop their affair. Jan-Erik is expelled from school, but in the end finds the courage to cope with life.

The film gave at once too much and too little. Interwoven in it are many themes: the tyranny of the conventional school system, the gulf between parents and children, the hypocrisy of official morality, the troubles of adolescence and the war (for "Caligula" is a Himmler opposed to the humane teacher Pippi, and the symbolism is clear). But as an attack on the system the film misfired, though it often brilliantly evoked the school atmosphere. The case of "Caligula" was too abnormal for general conclusions to be drawn from it; Bertha's dependence on him remained unexplored and unexplained; and it seemed improbable that "Caligula" should get away with it in the end. The film's exaggerations are deliberate and stylish—the influences both of expressionism and of the American thriller were evident—and Sjöberg made an effort to match the highly subjective anger in the young writer's script. Many tricks and shocks, in fact. But the film's most convincing passages were the quiet ones, in which the pupils talked as young people really do. Also notable was the playing of Stig Olin, who had some wonderful lines and acted with great charm as the Strindberg enthusiast Sandman. It is not surprising that he became one of Bergman's favourite actors, although he remains at his best in minor parts like that of Sandman.

Already in *Frenzy* the early Bergman world was almost complete: here are the poor prospects for genuine young love, the conflicts between the genera-



Realism: Nine-Christine Jönsson and Bengt Eklund in "Hamnstad."

tions, the lack of imagination in the Swedish *bourgeois* and the somewhat schematic conception of the place of good and evil in the world. "Caligula" is less stylised than Bergman's later devils, but the invincible, inexplicable wickedness is already there.

2

Frenzy made a strong impression at the time (not least in occupied Denmark) and it showed that Bergman had passion and a certain talent for realistic dialogue. But for his first writer-director assignment Bergman used a poor play, and *Kris* (*Crisis*; 1946) was mediocre. Bergman was interested in the character of the villain (played by Stig Olin) and transformed him into a partly demoniacal, partly comic fellow who knows all about his own corruption but finds his way out only in suicide. Here Bergman tried to blend realism and fantasy; he was not successful, and this approach has spoiled many of his later films. It handicapped the two films he made next, *Det Regnar på vår kärlek* (*It Rains on Our Love*; 1946) and *Skepp till Indialand* (*Ship to Dreamland*; 1947), both stories about young love and the obstacles it encounters. The first film had slight elements of social satire; the second was an unreal and melodramatic piece after the style of the Carné of the 'thirties.

After writing the script for *Kvinna utan ansikte* (*Woman Without a Face*; 1947), a rather inhuman study of a nymphomaniac directed by the veteran Gustaf Molander, Bergman touched bottom as a director with *Musik i Mörker* (*Music in the Dark*; 1948), a novelettish affair about a blind young man and his girl. Then, suddenly, he made in *Hamnstad* (*Sea-port*; 1948) a straight naturalistic film. Bergman was now thirty, and the period of uncertainty, if not of immaturity, was for the time being over.

Hamnstad was the first film made by Bergman for Svensk

Filmindustri, the company for which he has since mainly worked. It is the story of a young sailor who finds work in Göteborg as a docker. In a restaurant, he meets a young girl who has tried to drown herself. He likes her, but she wants to be honest with him and reveals her past. In flashbacks we learn that she spent a year in a reform school and of the moral ruin of her life. The young man is revolted, gets drunk, but finally returns to her. Working for the first time effectively on location, Bergman made a film less theatrical, and more convincing in its "black" scenes, than his previous ventures. The actors adapted themselves well to the realistic surroundings, with a particularly true and touching performance by Nine-Christine Jönsson as the forlorn girl. Despite some characteristic excesses, the direction was often effective. But the film's dialogue was too high-pitched, too literary, and too often Bergman used his characters as mouth-pieces to express his own views on the world. These seem recurrent flaws in his pictures: the good dialogue in many sections of *Frenzy* was due to Bergman's own direct experience of the *milieu*.

Bergman followed *Hamnstad* with another script for Gustaf Molander, *Eva* (also 1948). Another over-dramatised piece, the story of a jazz musician unable to find meaning in his married life, it also ended happily on a reconciliation. Perhaps the happy endings of *Hamnstad*, *Kvinna utan ansikte* and *Eva* did not satisfy Bergman. At any rate, he now made for another company the most desperate of his films. *Fängelse* (1949) was free (too free) cinema.

It opens with a meeting between an old schoolmaster and a film director. The teacher has an idea for a film: its theme is that Hell is on this earth, and it begins with the Devil proclaiming that now he is going to rule the world. He forbids the atom bomb—the human race ought not to be let off so easily. The conclusion is that suicide or the Church are the only alternatives open to the younger generation. The director tells a friend, the poet Thomas, about the teacher's idea. Thomas in return describes a meeting with a prostitute from Gamla Stan, and *Fängelse* then turns to the story of this girl, mixing cruel naturalism and nightmarish dream sequences. Her child is killed by her pimp, and she finally commits suicide. But the film is also concerned with Thomas himself, a man at the end of his tether. He tries to kill his wife, but fails. He falls in love with the prostitute,



Desperation: Eva Henning and Birger Malmsten (Thomas) in "Fängelse."

and in a poetic intermezzo he projects for her an old burlesque film in which (as in *Fängelse* itself) people are chased by the police and by Death. But this relationship does not last, and Thomas goes back to his wife. Finally, we return to the director in the studio: the teacher arrives to ask his opinion of the original idea. The director answers that you cannot make a film like that. It would have to end on a question mark, and to whom should the question be put? "That's true," answers the teacher, "there is nobody—unless you believe in God." "And you don't," is the director's answer. "Then there is no way out."

Smiles are rare—on the screen. But for the spectator it was difficult to take all this very seriously. Even to many Christians, the final alternatives must have seemed too crudely stated. The burlesque was agreeable and the scenes in the film studio entertaining. But the film never really explained the reasons either for Thomas's despair or for the break-up of his marriage. It was sincere, certainly, but Bergman had not achieved a fusion of his own obsessions with the 'real' objective world. This 'real' world was much too selectively adjusted to fit Bergman's feelings; and the technical invention could not disguise this fundamental narrowness (and was itself rather gleeful for the film's sombre content). Bergman is aware of this. As early as 1950 he said: "*Fängelse* represents a point of view that I have been forced to give up. I needed a severe and schematic conception of the world to get away from the formless, the vague and the obscure, in which I was stuck. So I turned to the dogmatic Christianity of the Middle Ages with its clear dividing lines between Good and Evil. Later I felt tied by it, I felt as though I were imprisoned." The director has called *Fängelse* "a morality play for the cinema", and its affinities with *The Seventh Seal* are easily seen. But so are the differences. In *The Seventh Seal* the *Weltanschauung* is much more comprehensive and the film comes much closer to the old morality plays in its fight between Good and Evil. *Fängelse* was a failure, but perhaps Bergman could not have made *The Seventh Seal* if he had not made this film first.

3

Törst (*Thirst*; 1949) is the film in which Bergman gets closest to real human beings and moves us most. As usual, he made a compilation of different kinds of suffering, but this time his neurotic characters were treated more tenderly than before. In these films, he is relentlessly seeking out the causes and symptoms of pain and evil, preferably those typical of his age and society. He feels (sometimes too prudishly) that we are not sufficiently shocked by them. Sadism, nymphomania, feminine homosexuality (he has never tackled male homosexuality), criminal abortion, suicide, libertinage, horrible accidents, blindness, the war, the atom bomb, feelings of guilt and fear—for a long period he did not tire of turning over the leaves of this catalogue, without ever managing to match the analytical power of Buñuel. The edge of his subjects is blunted by repetition and over-statement; but there is something sympathetic, even pathetic, in the young man's capacity to go on being shocked. Behind the disgust in these films is a strong craving for honesty, harmony and decency in human relationships. And the films remain somehow likeable in spite of their sordidness. It is only later, when the excuse of youth no longer exists, and the more or less indirect suggestion of how things ought to be has gone, that Bergman becomes dislikeable.

He is of the opinion that intellect cannot cope effectively with the urgent problems. In *Törst* the doctor is the Devil;



Humiliation: Ake Grönberg as the circus director Johansson in "*Sawdust and Tinsel*".

and his films are full of intellectuals who do not understand their wives and make a mess of their marriages. Erotic tenderness, moral and religious feeling, are found to be more helpful than intellect. It is not unfair, I think, to find a certain anti-intellectualism in Bergman's films. At chess, Death and the Devil cheat, so why bother much about chess?

Törst was based on some short stories by Birgit Tengroth, who also played the part of Viola in the film. The stories themselves seemed made for Bergman: the scriptwriter, Herbert Grevenius, took the last one in the collection as a frame for the film, using some others to illuminate it. This made for an interesting experiment rather than a tight dramatic structure. Except for an unbelievable dream sequence and a cheaply fantastic portrait of the devil-doctor, *Törst* was realistic in treatment.

In it a young couple, Ruth and Bertil, travel through Europe. They fight and fight, though—as in *Fängelse*—these conjugal clashes sometimes seem rather unnecessary. She has had a criminal abortion and cannot now have a child; he is still remembering an affair with the now bitterly lonely Viola. The doctor and a girl friend both try to seduce Viola; and—a characteristically exaggerated Bergman reaction—she drowns herself. Her story is used as a counterpoint to the main theme, that of Ruth and Bertil and their eventual reconciliation, but a weakness is that they do not themselves experience it—it is merely shown to the spectator. Some genuine acting covered up some of the flaws in the script of *Törst*. And Bergman's direction was here becoming more fluent, more discreet, less convulsive; he even allowed a little humour to creep in.

But the young Swede did not yet try his hand at comedy, although he considered a project for a film with Nils Poppe (the clown who got his first serious part in *The Seventh Seal*) about a burlesque director who becomes tired of burlesque. Instead, Bergman next wrote and directed *Till glädje* (*To Joy*; 1950). Here we encountered the familiar Bergman (a bitch



and her depraved lover, a bickering couple, a diabolical Don Juan) and also a new one (attempts at the idyllic and a strong affirmation of joy). The synthesis between old and new, however, was not really achieved and the film as a whole was very slight. The juxtaposition of the musician-hero's grief and the orchestra playing Beethoven's "An die Freude" is rather grand opera, but in its context an over-formalised expression of human feelings. Too often with Bergman, the single scene is too formal and the whole drama too formless.

Eva, Törst, Fängelse and *Till glädje* are all about marriage, and yet the worries of adolescence are in the films as well. This can be explained and perhaps to some degree defended by the fact that most of the main characters are exceptionally sensitive Swedes, artists (the people Bergman knows best). This also gives him opportunities to introduce "bits of art" into the films; and like Renoir he uses them as commentaries upon his story.

The writer-director was now becoming less and less afraid of "beauty". After a routine political thriller, *Sånt händer inte här* (*It Couldn't Happen Here*; 1950), he made in *Sommarlek* (*Summerplay*; 1951) the most "beautiful" of his films to date. Although written when Bergman was quite young, the story develops the relatively resigned and adult approach of *Till glädje*. But again the old and the new were not integrated. The "beauty" was too sweet and external to be set effectively against the death of the young lover, the blasphemy and the Devil cliché (a ballet master), though Bergman tried to salt it with premonitions of death and quarrels. As in *Hamnstad* and *Törst*, the construction was elaborate, an intricate system of flashbacks through which Bergman sought to illuminate the present and to give a melancholy impression of the passage of time. A ballerina visits the *skärgård*, where thirteen years ago she was wonderfully happy with a student who died in a cliff fall. Today, a rather dull and unimaginative journalist wants to marry her; and in telling him of the past she somehow strengthens their relationship.

As the ballerina, Maj-Britt Nilsson gave a performance of somewhat forced charm and humour. This was unfortunate, since from about 1950 Bergman began increasingly to look at the situations in his films through the eyes of his feminine characters. It is easy to see how he loves to work with actresses like Maj-Britt Nilsson, Eva Dahlbeck, Harriet Andersson, Ulla Jacobsson and Bibi Andersson. He seems more or less in love with them all, and as a consequence some of his later films are thrown off balance. A great actress might have saved *Sommarlek*; as it was, we had to be content to admire Bergman's growing skill in the handling of images, helped by the technical resources of Svensk Filmindustri. But *Sommarlek* won considerable praise in Scandinavia, where the critics have never been very helpful to Bergman and have generally tended to be either too enthusiastic or too hostile.

He followed the somewhat mannered *Sommarlek* with *Kvinnors väntan* (*Women Waiting*; 1952), also mannered in style and in subject a trivial and anecdotal concoction of five stories about five women. Had his creative development

"Growing skill in the handling of images . . ."

above: a scene from "Törst" (1949).

centre: Maj-Britt Nilsson and Stig Olin, ballerina and ballet-master in "Sommarlek" (1951).

below: guests at the country house party in "Smiles of a Summer Night". Jarl Kulle, Gunnar Björnstrand and Margit Carlquist.

stopped, and was he now only interested in perfecting his technique? In fact not even the technique was of interest in *Sommaren med Monika* (*Summer with Monika*), which he made the next year. Harry and Monika, lovers on a lower social level than the ballerina and the student of *Sommarlek*, escape from Stockholm and go to the *skärgård*, where for a short time they are happy. But the film contained more melodrama than analysis, and it was becoming increasingly apparent that Bergman rarely created living human beings in his films, that he was relying on his undeniable talent for directing actors and was using visual effects to cover up artificial situations. Harry and Monika were just a nice guy and a bad doll—and that was all.

4

But Bergman's ambitions were not dead, and in *Gycklarnas Afton* (*Sawdust and Tinsel*), made in the same year, he came much closer to creating an interesting portrait. This film was made for Sandrews, and as in the case of the same company's *Miss Julie* the producer was Rune Waldekrantz. It is a film which I personally dislike; but it must be admitted that there is some truth and feeling and pity in the characterisation of the circus director, Johansson. (Perhaps it is partly self-pity: the film director seems almost to identify himself with the circus director. I am sure that in moments of doubt and anxiety Bergman feels that he is not a poet, only an entertainer.) Johansson is rootless, humiliated by his mistress, Anne, and *declassé* in relation to the actors who despise him. The circus goes badly, and the director is no longer much interested in show business. He feels guilty because he has left his wife, but he cannot go back to her; he tries to kill himself, but fails. He will have to continue with the circus. Ake Grönberg gave an honest if somewhat monotonous performance in the part, and it was unnecessary to elaborate the theme as Bergman did in the sado-masochistic scenes. You could take out the showy flashback, the seduction scene with Anne and the fight at the end without losing any of the important points. These scenes made pain too picturesque; they spoilt the film's feeling; and they were not convincing in themselves. Again, the subjective and the real worlds remained separate.

Bergman continued with show business in *En lektion i kärlek* (*A Lesson in Love*; 1954), his first comedy. About a quarrelsome couple (its starting point was an episode from *Kvinnors väntan* about a quarrelling, middle-aged couple stuck in a lift) it did not take humour seriously enough and tottered between sophisticated and low comedy. Neither of these elements had charm. In *Kvinnodröm* (*Woman-dream*; 1955) he took up another familiar theme. *Sommaren med Monika* and *Gycklarnas Afton* had dealt with the humiliation of the male in sexual relationships, not entirely innocently. *Kvinnors väntan*, *En lektion i kärlek* and the later *Smiles of a Summer Night* play more lightly with the same subject. In *Kvinnodröm*, the theme is handled painfully in an account of an elderly consul's infatuation with a young model. He can only make a sentimental, aesthetic adventure of the meeting, and Bergman cruelly dwells on his failings. Suddenly the consul's daughter—a sort of female werewolf—is introduced, and we long for the more real world of James Whale.

5

Then something exciting happened. Bergman found a style and held to it. The style of *Sommarnattens leende* (*Smiles of a Summer Night*; 1955) was a curious one. To be successfully decadent a cold-blooded detachment from 'life'



"Smiles of a Summer Night": Naima Wifstrand.

is necessary, and Bergman's temperament is such that he cannot retreat from 'life'. In a sense the style suited him, because he was not obliged to create realistic characters; in a sense it was a misfit, since wit, extreme detachment and hedonistic pleasure are not for him. So the film was not exciting because of the fact that it worked—it did not—but for the self-knowledge it revealed. Bergman must have perceived that in almost all his earlier pictures he had mixed too many styles, that he had rarely been successful in creating real people. He now recognises the need for discipline, for working within his own limits. *Smiles of a Summer Night*, *The Seventh Seal* and his new film *Nära livet* all testify to this.

Smiles of a Summer Night contains the loveliest sequence ever made by the director, that in which Eva Dahlbeck sings "*Freut Euch des Lebens* . . ." and the image is frozen as if to illustrate Faust's cry to the *Augenblick*: "Verweile doch! du bist so schön!" The old Naima Wifstrand is exactly right, and the younger women are beautiful. Although Bergman is no Ophuls the images often have true glamour. But the dialogue lets the film down: it is not sufficiently light and pointed and the frivolity is too determined.

As so often, after trying to renew himself, Bergman next fell back on an old subject. He returned virtually to *Frenzy*, trying to bring it up to date in his development. The script of this film, *Sista paret ut* (1956), was again taken over by Sjöberg and the results were none too happy. A young man has trouble with his girl and his mother is seeking a divorce. He is desperate but finds some comfort with another girl. A

laconic old teacher, who first ironically advises him to commit suicide, later tells him that you survive only through will-power and intelligence. This sounds like Sjöberg's ending. At any rate, the film-makers fought over it and the film is not rounded off. But Sjöberg—who does better than Bergman at analysing people—produced a work which was an interesting failure and had several moments of truth and some touching scenes between the boy and the second girl. For a change, this was a film which tried to come to grips with Swedish life without recourse to symbolism, expressionism or metaphysics.

The subject of Bergman's next and most ambitious work, *Det sjunde inseglet* (*The Seventh Seal*), was life on the whole planet. Although he was immensely helped by using the traditions of the old morality play, the film emerged as cold and a little remote. It is an illustration of the biblical "The meek shall inherit the Earth", and it succeeded to an unpredictable degree. But can we accept the visionary actor and his family as the meek who ought to survive? Are they not ideals of a puritanism which seems almost indecent in relation to the menaces of war and the H-bomb? Is it good Christianity (not to mention good humanism) to let Death take all the normal, 'unclean' people without much concern? Nils Poppe has scarcely the stature for the poet in the common man, the whole man in harmony with nature. As the knight, Max von Sydow marvellously combines the human and the allegorical and almost all the emotion in the film is concentrated on him—a pointer to its lack of proportion. Gunnar Björnstrand seems too modern and realistic as the squire, Death is theatrically conceived, and some of the

dialogue has a pseudo-poetical flavour. Otherwise, the film was certainly well-made, visually imaginative and handsome, and to a greater extent than before Bergman transcended his solipsism. But it was at the expense of feeling and humanity. The knight plays for nothing less than the salvation of mankind, and we ought to be more gripped and moved. But Bergman's own disgust prevents him from being sufficiently "engaged" to view Death's onslaughts as very tragic. He can be profoundly pained by the death of one of his characters, but the more general "love of mankind" scarcely seems to mean much to him.

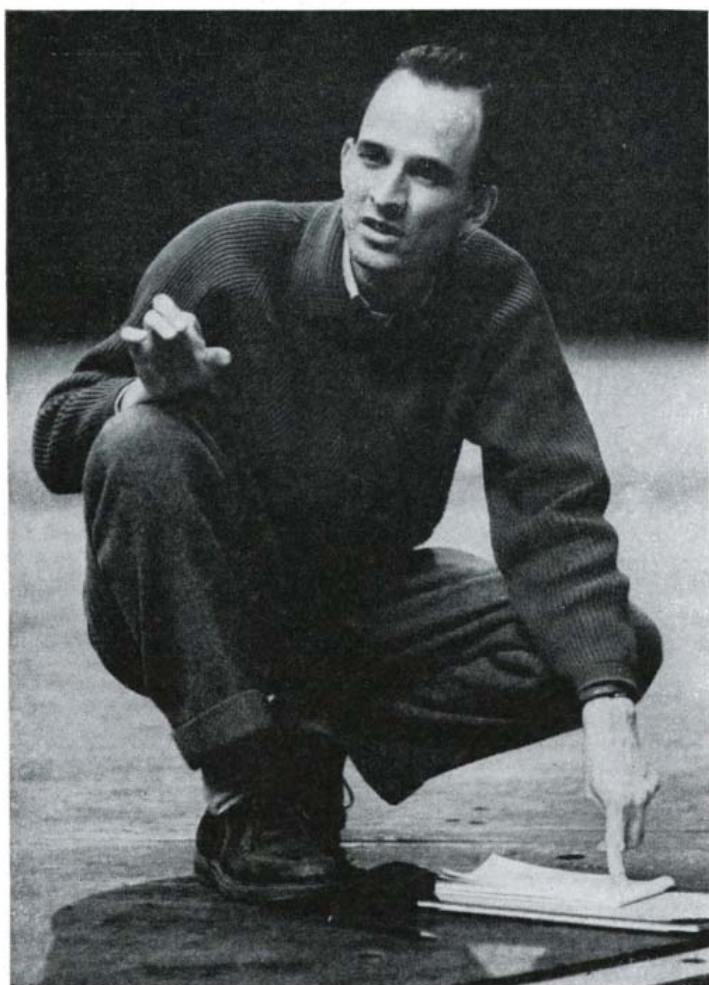
Yet compared with *The Seventh Seal*, Bergman's two most recent films, *Smultronstället* (*Wild Strawberries*; 1957) and *Nära livet* (*Brink of Life*; 1958) seem very minor. The portrait of the old doctor (Victor Sjöström) in the first is too incomplete, as are the sensation-seeking descriptions of the women in a maternity hospital in the second. *Nära livet* never leaves the hospital, uses very long takes with close-ups, and dispenses altogether with music. In its concentration on the faces of suffering women, it reminds the spectator of Dreyer.

6

Throughout his career Bergman has been influenced by many film-makers, as a rule absorbing and transforming these impulses in a personal way. Perhaps only Sjöberg's desire to give his films an extra dimension, Dreyer's torture technique and the masochism in some German pictures have been really harmful for him. Yet Bergman is an original. He is now a brilliant *metteur en scène*; and he is something more than that, though he has not yet proved himself a great poet of the cinema. He has written and directed eleven completely original films. Of the twenty-three films he has collaborated on or created, all but three—*Sawdust and Tinsel*, *Smiles of a Summer Night* and *The Seventh Seal*—are set in the present. By going back in time in these films, he has reached a new degree of detachment; and through these experiences he may arrive at detachment in a work directly concerned with the contemporary scene. He has never leaned on a classic. He is a poor writer, and has never produced a classic film himself. But it now seems possible that he will one day—perhaps from a script by someone else.

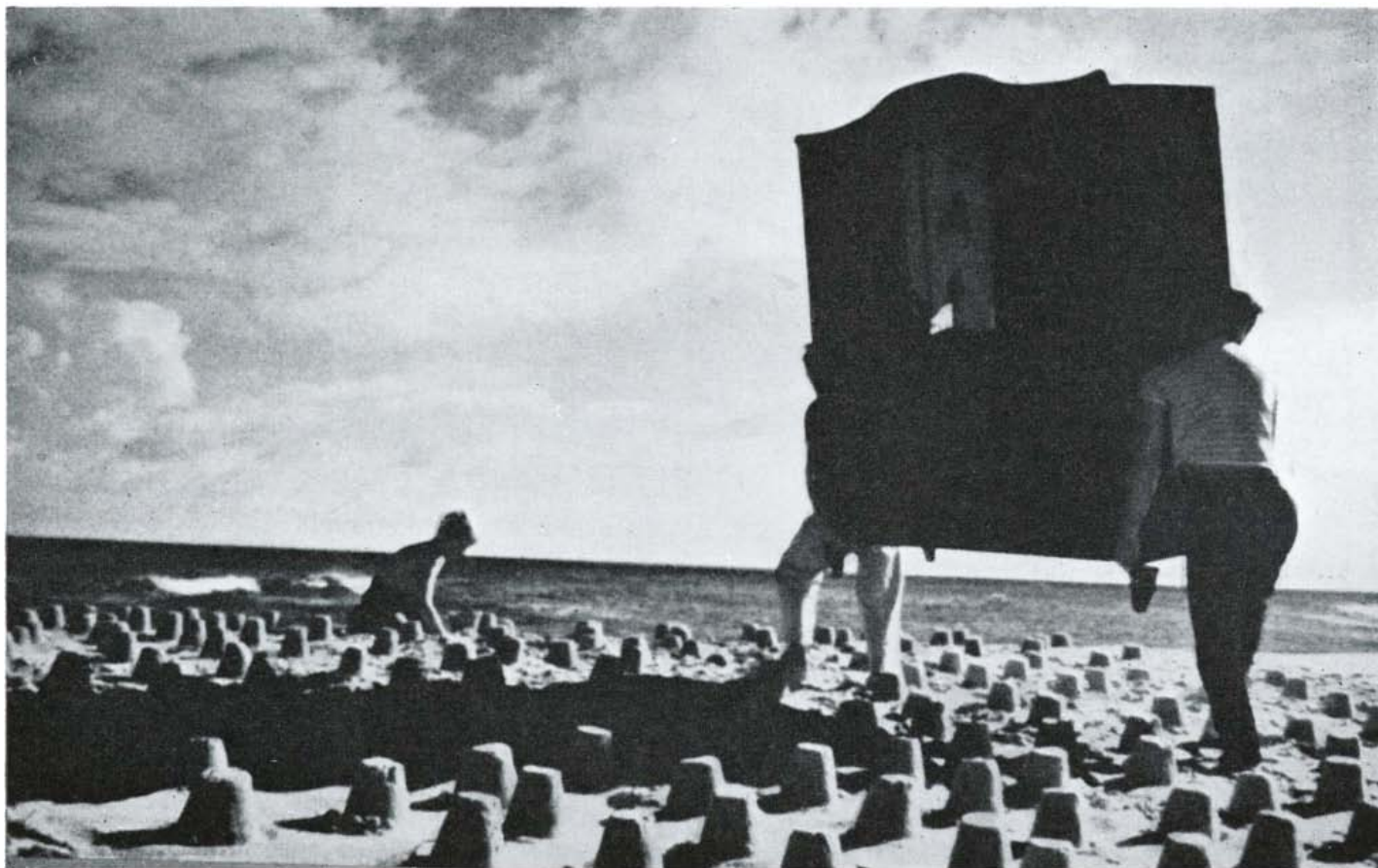
You could be unpleasant and call him the best German director of the post-war period, but this simplification would leave out the many important nuances that make the Swedes Swedish. In contra-distinction to many of the famous German films, Bergman's pictures usually relate their bad dreams directly to contemporary life. His dream sequences may be stilted and heavy but at least they are used in order to illuminate—they do not "stand alone". The interpretation is not left to a Kracauer: Bergman interprets for himself.

He has not only learned from German artists. Anouilh's contrasts between young and old, and other themes of his, have also been important to Bergman. It is also true, however, that Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus* impressed and shocked him greatly. In Adrian Leverkühn, the modern Faust, the egocentric artist whose life is a constant striving, Bergman has presumably seen reflected his own aspirations. And there is a Faust and a Mephisto in Ingmar Bergman. They have a constant debate and we should be interested in it, although it is not always easy.



Ingmar Bergman.

the festivals



Poland: "Two Men and a Wardrobe".

experiment at Brussels

The Texture of Decay. Reflections on Black. The Very Eye of Night. Desire in a Public Dump. No-one could complain that Brussels did not bring us face to face with the *avant-garde*. The selection jury had received over 400 films and showed us 133 of them. Their criterion seems to have been—rightly—to show anything with any sort of novelty to it. But the inevitable haggling about what really constitutes an experimental film was carried long into the nights.

It is not a very fruitful discussion. The successful experiment has a way of not seeming experimental at all: it comes over as the inevitable way of saying something fresh. And the more obvious pioneering—images of oscillating sounds, dance films in negative and so on—is new enough and easy enough to justify as experiment, but who cares? There is, too the question of how to fit conventionally financed films into the picture. *A Man Escaped, Tokyo Story, A Man is Ten Feet Tall* are all experimental films in the important

sense that they extend the cinema's range. Contrast them with three-quarters of the abstracts we saw—which are no more and no less experimental than doodling—and this whole business of housing "experimental" work under one roof becomes meaningless.

Just the same, there is an important distinction which needs to be made. It has to do with the film-makers' attitude towards the cinema as a mass medium. The film-maker who wants his work to connect with commercial production—either as precedent or as protest—is after a different thing from the abstractionist and introvert who seeks an élite-cinema for the minority. There is no point of contact between them. If my preference lies with the former, it is largely because the talent of the minority film-makers so rarely justifies the contempt for popular standards which they assume as their right.

Foremost among the cinema's isolationists are the makers of abstract films. We saw four or five dozen examples of



Britain: "The Little Island". Goodness, Truth and Beauty.

their work at Brussels—cut-out shapes, animations, flowing blobs of paint, formal interpretations of real objects. Most of them gave the sense of people working, solidly enough, in a medium which only the touch of genius can vindicate: without it, there is nothing. Robert Breer sent four little essays, charming and tricky in an idiosyncratic way: civilised programme-fillers. The Israeli *Chansons sans Paroles* (Yorma Gross), which animates for three minutes the movements of matches, cigarettes, crumpled bits of paper, and gives their capers vague anthropomorphic overtones, is delightful, poetic, wholly successful. Hillary Harris's *Highway* is a montage of formalised travelling shots set to jazz: it has a welcome professional incisiveness to it and goes with an exhilarating bounce. Hy Hirsch, in *Autumn Spectrum*, uses water reflections in Amsterdam canals to make a film of unexpectedly intense atmosphere, neat, gentle and nostalgic. Francis Thompson's *N.Y., N.Y.*, with its glowing testimonial from Aldous Huxley and bravura use of mirrors and prisms, distorts New York townscapes into spectacularly glamorous shapes and reminds one of the most expensive kind of *New Yorker* advertisements: very clever. Len Lye's *Free Radicals* is in a different class; and one was glad to see it getting the second prize. Angular white lines, scratched direct on to black leader and set to a coldly formal African tribal accompaniment, move around the screen with the sort of intricate symmetry and invention one associates with a piece of Bach.

With the American *avant-garde* (nearly half the festival films were American) we are on stickier ground. Those of us who knew the school through the poetic anecdotes of James Broughton were let down with a damp thud. Most of these films—those of Stan Brakhage, Willard Maas and Ben Moore, Maya Deren, Kenneth Anger—are formidably humourless and what you might call symbol-happy. They jumble the real with the symbolic, the conscious with the sub-conscious. At the slightest stimulation, they throw on the screen images of sinks overflowing, priests eating jewels, knitting needles, hairpins. It is an intense, self-obsessed world that these films wade through. This in itself, of course, would be nothing against them if their method were not usually so perfunctory, the talent which goes into them so thin. Many of these films are incomprehensible without reference to text-books; and the process which fuses symbol with reality into a meaningful statement—the aesthetic process, in other words—is too often missing.

The six films of Stan Brakhage, favourites with the selection jury who gave them a collective prize, give one the sense of the medium directing the film-maker. Fortuitous effects of

rapid camera movement (*Anticipation of the Night* runs, silent, for 40 minutes and I can recollect not a single sharp, static image in it), edge-fogging, soft focus are all happily accepted as significant. Many of Brakhage's films take us first into the real world, then allow themselves to become entirely dominated by symbol, allusion, sub-conscious association. The difficulty is that the reality being illuminated is never brought alive. Brakhage undoubtedly has the eye of a film-maker; but his films remain private because their slap-dash technique only allows them to speak on a dry, theoretical, "Oh *that's* what he means" sort of level.

The surprisingly small entry of animated films was, on the whole, rather tame. The slickness and handsome design of the films from U.P.A., *Storyboard* and *Terrytoons* make them all very easy on the eye. But why do all these clever American cartoons go in for the same tentative, facetious mock-seriousness? Why have they lost the satirical edge of, say, the early Magoos? Of a thoroughly efficient bunch, I enjoyed most the sardonic little Terrytoon *Flebus*, and *Storyboard's Tender Game*, whose gentle lyricism intermittently breaks through the modishness of the design. All these films are inventive, prettily drawn and witty, but they are somehow imprisoned by their own compulsive charm.

Turning from these sophisticated little plays with life to *The Little Island*, one enters a different world. This is a 30-minute cartoon, independently produced by Richard Williams—the achievement of getting it made is unique and astonishing—which dares to be fundamentally serious. *The Little Island* is a comic cartoon about ideas: a tough, aggressive, intellectually hard film which illustrates its argument through the horseplay of grotesque little animated figures. Three versatile-shaped zanies, representing roughly Truth, Beauty and Goodness, fight it out on a desert island. Beneath its surface comedy *The Little Island* is an allegory about the futility of absolute values—"a satire on everything", Williams calls it, with the sort of humorous fearlessness of the big gesture which also characterises the film itself. Without quite sustaining the high standard of invention it sets itself in its best parts, *The Little Island* is a new and individual picture, funny in a way entirely its own. It gains much from Tristram Cary's crafty sound-track. Like all good allegories, one can enjoy it without puzzling out its implied layers of meaning. And, apart from the film's own virtues, it is good, for once, to see a cartoon with a hard centre.

2

The revelation of the Festival was a 15-minute picture made by a graduate of the Warsaw Film School, Raymond Polanski. *Two Men and a Wardrobe* opens with a long shot of the sea. It is held on the screen for some time until, slowly and with effort, two men surface and scramble on to the beach. They are wearing casual working clothes and carry a huge, old-fashioned wardrobe. Flushed with their success, they do a little dance and proceed into town. Here they try to do the ordinary things—travel on a tram, find a flat, get into a hotel—only insisting that they be allowed to keep their wardrobe with them. But it will not fit in. They get savagely kicked about by a gang of thugs who attack them with a kitten they have specially killed for the job; are spurned by girls; witness some of the casual brutalities of the city. They eat a simple meal of smoked herring and, after another unsuccessful attempt to come to terms with terrestrial life, return to the sea.

Read it how you wish—as a farcical fantasy or a parable about the cost of private values in the modern world—*Two Men and a Wardrobe* creates its own completely logical world by turning everything it observes, the pathos as well as the violence, into a kind of poetic slapstick. The two sane, gentle, vulnerable men want to hurt no-one. They suffer their terrible knock-about patiently and without much surprise; but when they go down they take their wardrobe with them. Ionesco and the surrealists were frequently

invoked to give terms of reference under which to discuss this film, but the analogies are misleading. Once it has established its beautiful metaphor, the film proceeds quite rationally from its own premise. It makes you wonder about what you do with your own wardrobe.

Dom, which won the Grand Prix, is the work of two young Polish film-makers, Walerian Borowszyk and Jan Lenica. It uses the full repertory of the cinema's trick effects to crystallise, in a series of metaphysically conceived sequences, an atmosphere of anxiety and insecurity. *Dom* means "house" or "home", and as their key symbol the directors have used a close-up of a young girl, formally animated, linking episodes of disturbing symbolism: a wig of woman's hair takes on a life of its own, moves, crunches an orange, disintegrates a glass beaker. Old photographs and mementos are displayed with sentimental tenderness. The plaster cast of a loved one cracks and falls to pieces. A *tour-de-force* of purely visual film-making, *Dom* makes a telling comparison with the American *avant-garde* films of similar aims. Its invention is fresh, its surface content continuously fascinating, its grasp of the medium firm; and it proceeds with the intensity and concentration of poetry.

A generally scorned picture from Poland was *Perdu*, a 16mm. exercise in adolescent gloom. The first person camera here observes the real and imagined world of a *bistro* through the eyes of a drunken, desperate young man. The film is full of ashtrays and disenchantment, but it is *felt*: the most engaging kind of first picture, full of personal detail and unabashed passion. Many of the critics complained of its heavy expressionism—everything low-key tends to get labelled expressionism—but it really does catch a mood.

"*Documentaire subjectif; sujets divers, quartier de la rue Mouffetard.*" This is how Agnès Varda summarises her two-reeler *Opéra-Mouffe*. She uses simple chapter title headings to introduce a series of sketches of the neighbourhood and mixes strict actuality items—old people in the markets, children playing with masks—with more personal

episodes: a pregnant woman shopping, young lovers in their bedroom. There are beautiful episodes in the film and its casual form gives the director freedom to wander as she pleases. Although there is something a little self-conscious about the observation, the essay format is original and opens up possibilities for exploration—a sort of film equivalent of a Cartier-Bresson album with one or two more personal stories thrown in.

Cutting right across the categories of style and technical experiment came a group of five films, from five different countries and with differing aims, which share a common anger at the conventions of popular entertainment and the accepted standards of public life. This group represents the nearest thing to a movement that Brussels revealed: most of them use newsreel or snatched actuality material to interpret life in social terms. All of them contain a satirical element and they strike hard.

From Austria, Peter Kubelka's *Mosaik im Vertrauen* mixes dull, *bourgeois* snatches of conversation on its sound-track with explosive newsreel shots of warfare and motor-racing accidents, and jumbles, with surrealist irreverence, a dozen incompatible ingredients into a most engaging little aggressive gesture. The Polish *Life is Beautiful* is a newsreel compilation with a really vicious kick to it. Shots of concentration camps, H-bombs exploding, hysterical entertainments, are accompanied by a sound-track which gently croons *J'Attendrai, C'Est si Bon*, and German and American pop songs. This is a cry of rage, an attempt to provoke a violent shock in the spectator. A hollow anti-climax of an ending—a monkey lays a wreath on the grave of Homo Sapiens—weakens a film which doesn't really sustain its length but at its best makes you sit up.

From Sweden, *En Dag i Staden* is described by its makers in a pastiche manifesto as "a film about a day in the future. It is a documented vision: . . . fantastic and possible. Violent, agitated, anti-entertaining, noisy . . ." Anti-entertaining is the keynote of this satire on film reporting, which manages to take a swipe at quite a few sacred cows. Boring things—a man walking down a street, for instance—are shown at length and with loving care while the commentator pours forth high-sounding inanities; dramatic incidents—a ship sinking on a pleasure cruise—are shown and abruptly cut away from without comment. Soldiers, military bands, civil servant interviews are all attacked with gusto. A good joke.

Claude Goretta and Alain Tanner's *Nice Time* is similarly preoccupied with commenting on accepted values. The images of Piccadilly at night are set against a mixture of popular entertainment sounds and carry a bitter protest. This is the subtlest of the protest films because it gains an extra dimension in showing us the isolation of the victims. The Japanese *Tokyo 58*, made by a new independent unit with ambitious plans, builds on newsreel material of a really horrific kind. We see Japanese crooners, aping Elvis Presley and the rest with uncanny accuracy and whipping their young audiences into frenzies. From these and other images of mass entertainments, the film takes us to prints of Samurai, then turns to their 1958 descendants who rake in the profits from the entertainment palaces. It is a tough, specific attack.

3

It is unlikely that anyone will assemble 133 experimental films again in a hurry, and the Brussels show was therefore definitive about the whole movement for some years to come. What was the total impression?

Brussels was rewarding and important because it showed *Opéra-Mouffe*, *The Little Island*, *Two Men and a Wardrobe*, *Dom* and half a dozen others. All these films are experimental in the sense that they make their own tools, but this is only an incidental merit. It is their quality of passion, freely expressed, that sets them apart. It is also the quality

France: children's games in "Opéra Mouffe".



which the cinema as a whole needs and an imaginatively organised industry should use.

Almost all the important films at Brussels were made by professionals scraping together precarious budgets from the left-overs of commercial production. This is a chancy, frustrating world, and not surprisingly the successful results are few. What can be expected from it, given goodwill and sane organisation, is shown by the films from the Warsaw film school; five of the seven Polish entries had real quality. (It is in all our interests, not only the Poles', that this experiment should be allowed to continue.) In Britain the B.F.I. Experimental Fund has made a welcome beginning in trying to organise experimental work, but it is ultimately too much

to expect films of real calibre from work done under amateur conditions on 16 mm.

The obverse of the rigid and exclusive financing systems of the larger film-producing countries is the self-enclosed, sterile *avant garde*. From this—the evidence of Brussels is quite clear—one can expect little more than films as a hobby for the makers. One bears these film-makers no ill-will, but I for one do not want to see any more of those montages of neon lights, or undulating reflections in water or low-angled views of pylons. And I don't want to see any more films which can only be justified on the grounds that they Use the Medium.

KAREL REISZ

Cannes

ORGANISING a film festival must be one of the most worrying jobs in the world—especially if, like Cannes, it is the first of the year. It may always turn out triumphantly, like last year's festival which brought the revelations of *Kanal* and *A Generation*, *Un condamné à mort s'est échappé*, *The Forty-First* and *The Seventh Seal*; or the year before, with *Pather Panchali*, *Torero* and *Merry-go-round*. On the other hand, there is an equal chance, as this year, that almost every film will prove a disappointment; and there is only the sunshine to make your trip worth while. The gamble is inevitable; and the critics and film-merchants must recognise that they are in it as deeply as the Festival organisers.

Not that the gamble seemed too great, though, with new films by Bardem, Bergman, Tati, Ray, Asquith, Cacoyannis and Sucksdorff. It was all the more perturbing that each of them somehow failed to measure up to expectation. Perhaps it was salutary that they all faltered together: that way it was easier to remember that any artist who is an artist is bound to have his failures in this complex and intransigent medium; and that our job, as audience and critics, is to stand by him and to maintain our faith through failure as well as success.

The biggest disappointment was Bardem's *La Venganza*. Superficially, it is no more than a conventional Latin tale of vendetta and jealousy under the naked sun. There is more to it than that though; it is, indeed, the extra element that Bardem has tried to inject into the film which has resulted in its failure. He has tried to combine with a conventional melodrama a social and political theme—a story of landlords and strikers, of exploiters defeated by workers' unity. The two elements prove irreconcilable; and the political theme (severely pruned by the censor, it is said) appears crude and old-fashioned. In the context of contemporary Spain, however, it is impossible not to applaud the intentions of the film,

however misguided, from an artistic point of view, it may be.

Satyajit Ray was poorly represented by *The Philosopher's Stone*, an obvious pot-boiler, which by some oriental whim had been submitted along with the Indo-Russian *Pardesi* (*Journey Across Three Seas*) as the Indian entry. While Ray's film clearly represented a commercial chore, there is no doubt that Nara Livet (*The Brink of Life*) was a major creative work for Ingmar Bergman. His setting is a ward in a maternity hospital; and he explores the feelings and reactions of three mothers, one of whom has just miscarried the child she wanted but her husband did not; one of whom joyfully desires the child she is to lose at birth; a third who only gradually reconciles herself to the coming of an illegitimate child she never thought of conceiving. Bergman says of the film: "There is a secret about life, about birth and death, a secret about why some are called to live and others are called to die." It is impossible not to feel that it is death rather than birth which fascinates Bergman, and that there is a morbid sense of mortality about it all. One child perishes in the womb, another at birth; at the end of the film the third has still to fight its way into an unwelcoming world.

The film depends upon the successful exposition of the characters and reactions of the mothers—played by Eva Dahlbeck, Ingrid Thulin and Bibi Andersson—and for me at least the characters are never realised: the film ends abruptly when the revelation has hardly begun. Again, Bergman's harsh realism—the pain and messiness, the ugly words and repellent images—is not absorbed; it remains horrifying rather than revealing. In a director of lesser calibre, it might be thought sensationalism.

Sucksdorff's *The Bow and the Flute* was shown at the start of the Festival, and I missed it. Michael Cacoyannis' *A Matter of Dignity* tells of a bourgeois family on the point of bankruptcy, absurdly struggling to keep up appearances, pinning all their hopes on their daughter's catching a rich husband. The tragedy lies in the character of this daughter who, endowed with a little more perception and intelligence and sensitivity than the rest of her superficial world, is still ready to sacrifice herself and everyone else to the sham of it all. The film sometimes falls into banalities that are surprising in Cacoyannis; but there is a beautiful performance by Ellie Lambetti, some shrewd observation of bourgeois pretensions and a climactic scene, remarkably photographed by Walter Lassally, which provides one of the most physically exciting you can hope to see in the cinema.

The most controversial film was Tati's long-awaited *Mon Oncle*. Tati is a difficult director to discuss; his style is so much a matter of taste—and for me this new film confirms an antipathy. He has a dryness which smacks of misanthropy more than wit; and a remoteness—heightened by his



Mechanised living. Jacques Tati's "Mon Oncle".

technique of shooting in long shot—which seems rather resignation than intellectual detachment. *Mon Oncle* shows M. Hulot at home, inhabiting an apartment at the top of a ramshackle building in a quaint and lively little backwater. In contrast, Hulot's sister and brother-in-law live in a chilly and pretentious mechanised palace, all buttons and lights and buzzers, starkly furnished with tormented settees which Hulot finds more comfortable ups de down, and chairs that look like bird-cages. The house is filled with machinery that functions with the same alarming masterfulness as the machinery in Arpel's plastics factory. The entire film is a series of variations on the single theme of the disruption that Hulot's more human approach to life effects in this clinical *ménage*, and the escape which it offers to the Arpels' little son.

Tati can be very funny indeed: he has the special quality found in the French music-hall of turning and developing and polishing a gag, piling trifle upon trifle to produce a monstrous and irresistible absurdity. But *Mon Oncle* lacks control. It is reasonable enough that in form it should be shapeless and meandering, a progression of variations. But the comedy too lacks structure; the audience's reactions are not controlled, and the effect is finally frustrating and fatiguing.

Tati has a great many admirers, though, and the film was awarded a special prize. The *Palme d'Or*, however, was reserved for the remarkable Soviet entry *The Cranes Are Flying*. It is always easy to be carried away by a Soviet film which, as this one does, breaks away from the stricter unrealities of Socialist Realism to show, for example, that there were whores and racketeers and evaders of military service in Russia during the war, alongside the heroes. But there is no denying the vigour and immense technical virtuosity of this film. It has so much youthful turbulence and vitality, such a sense of experiment and innovation, that it is something of a surprise to find that the director is Michael Kalatozov, who made *True Friends* and *The First Echelon*, while Urusevsky, the cameraman, whose creative contribution to the film was obviously substantial, was Donskoi's cameraman on *The Village Teacher* and Chukrai's on *The Forty-First*. Sometimes the bravura seems excessive and the effects oddly dated; but this is above all a *film*, and it never ceases to be exciting and stimulating. The principal role is splendidly played by Tatiana Samoilova, whose exotic, withdrawn beauty allowed her to steal the Cannes limelight from more experienced figures like Lollobrigida and Jayne Mansfield.

Eastern Europe produced no other great surprises. The Czech *Suburban Romance* (which I missed) was generally liked; the Rumanian entry was a rather turgid and old-fashioned revolutionary saga. The Hungarian *The Iron Flower* is an unexpectedly tender and sad little romance about an out-of-work dyer and a laundress who fall in love but are separated when the difficult times of the early 'thirties drive the girl to become the mistress of her employer. It is the second film of Janos Hersko, and besides all the assurance one has come to recognise from graduates of the Eastern European film schools it has a most winning freshness and humanity. The Polish film *The Eighth Day of the Week*, directed by Aleksander Ford from a script by Marek Hlasko, was withdrawn at the last moment, presumably because of a somewhat indiscreet interview which Hlasko had given the press in Paris.

But if the East did not make the mark it has in recent years, the West did little better. The British entry *Orders to Kill*, the American *The Long, Hot Summer*, *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Desire Under the Elms*, attracted little admiration. West Germany sent a creaky old operetta; Austria a further dislikeable instalment in the romantic adventures of Sissi, Empress of Austria and Hungary. Italy sent *Giovanni Mariti* (directed by Mario Bolognini), a film which has borrowed shamelessly from *I Vitelloni* and shows how fatally the *telefono bianco* manner has invaded the neo-realist style. Pietro Germi's *Uomo di Paglia*, the story



Hungary's "The Iron Flower".

of a married man's brief and disastrous affair with a neurotic girl, is in a truer tradition. Germi's film lacks structure and technical skill, but it was one of the most honest and sympathetic films we saw this year at Cannes.

Perhaps the most exotic and engaging entry was the Tunisian *Goha*, a poetic fantasy made by the French director Jacques Baratier. With an artlessness that miraculously avoids the *chichi*, it tells the story of a village simpleton who makes love to the neglected wife of the local sage, is shunned by the village and his family, and finally—touched by the forgiveness of the man he has wronged—commits suicide.

Some of the best things, though, were to be found *hors festival*. The Cinémathèque Française presented an *Hommage* to Charles Pathé which included a brilliant unknown realist film of 1915, *Le Chemineau*. A series of *séances* of *cinéma d'animation* introduced some very encouraging work from all over the world, amongst which Richard Williams' *The Little Island* attracted some of the most favourable comment. But most remarkable was the double bill of François Truffaut's *Les Mistons* and Claude Chabrol's *Le Beau Serge*. Truffaut and Chabrol are young French critics; and these are their first films.

Les Mistons is a short story about a love affair which is bedevilled during its tragically brief career by the innocent malice of a gang of small boys. Often academic, it has nevertheless a technical accomplishment and a coherence and purity of feeling which rate it very high indeed. *Le Beau Serge* is a feature; entirely financed by Chabrol himself, it has the sort of strong personal quality which is rarely possible within the framework of ordinary commercial production. It tells of a boy who returns to his native village to find his boyhood friend and hero, Serge, has become the village drunkard, and is carrying on with his wife's sister. Serge needs François' help; François needs to help Serge; and the film is concerned with their struggle to establish the necessary contact. They come to terms at last in the final moments of the film, when François, sick and weak, drags and beats the drunken Serge to the bedside of his wife, who is giving birth to their first child: the friendship is realised; for the moment at least Serge is regenerated. Chabrol has handled the difficult theme of a friendship whose grounds are indefinable, a kind of tentative moral sparring to find a common ground, with immense subtlety; and with equal skill he employs melodramatic situations to enlighten an entirely realistic conflict. He has won from his young actors performances that are deeply sensitive and highly intelligent; and he has used the *cadre* of the French countryside with great feeling. The trip to Cannes, 1958, would have been justified if only for the opportunity to see this first work of a young director of immense promise.

DAVID ROBINSON



Tatiana Samoilova in "The Cranes are Flying".

soviet cinema | The New Way

by CYNTHIA GRENIER

THE past two years have seen a good many interesting—if not downright exciting—developments in the Soviet cinema. In London, the National Film Theatre's Soviet season of 1956 showed some early results of the thaw; and more recently the Paris Cinémathèque has presented a short season of some of the newer Russian productions. The new tendencies and preoccupations of the Soviet cinema are becoming apparent, and we can begin to define certain main themes as characteristic of this period of artistic promise.

One of the most noticeable changes, already foreseeable a year or two ago, has been a significant shift of emphasis from the high-minded stock characters standing for abstract concepts towards individual human beings equipped with a healthy collection of frailties. An early example of this trend, of course, was *The Forty-First*, a film which marks a transition point in the Soviet cinema's recent progress towards characterisations less stereotyped and more humanly complex. The very fact that the hero, an aristocratic White Army officer, could be treated sympathetically, shown as both charming and intelligent, was in itself a notable advance. The sturdy little heroine, although a character considerably more in the Soviet cinema's old style, was still made to appear a little ridiculous while composing her inflated poetry. (And the verse itself was not at all unlike the sort of thing that until recently marked the official poetic outpourings of the Soviet Union.) At the same time, *The Forty-First* was restricted by a rather banal plot; its characters could only achieve a certain level of complexity.

Since *The Forty-First*, however, the Soviets have shown us

a good half-dozen films with real individuals for heroes—people with virtues and defects, enthusiasms and weaknesses, beliefs and doubts. There is apparently an equally new impulse behind the casting of actors. In the past, it too often seemed that the 'good' people had to have fine, noble faces with suitably high-principled expressions, the better to fit the archetype. Now we encounter a far greater range of personalities and features. The actors look as if they had been cast for their fitness for the role rather than for their resemblance to some ideal of the Soviet worker. On the feminine side, the beefy tractor-driving lasses have lately given way to surprisingly svelte and pretty creatures, heroines who tend to be high-spirited, capricious, on occasion even flirtatious, and who can achieve an elegance of their own. Tatiana Samoilova, of *The Cranes are Flying*, is a striking but by no means solitary example of this new breed of Soviet film heroine.

In the scenarios, this new maturity and sophistication finds expression in the considerable emphasis now attached to the place of love in human relations. In *The House Where I Live*, the first film of the new school to treat of adultery, one character tells another, "You are taking another man's wife." "Yes," comes the answer, "but I love her . . ." The traditional conflicts between love and duty are no longer automatically resolved on the side of duty. In the same film, the wife of a geologist who is absent for months at a time on prospecting trips desperately cries out that she can no longer bear this sort of life; soon afterwards she leaves her husband. The student next door, trying to tell the geologist that he regards

him as a hero because of his difficult and exacting work, gets only a bitter and cynical reply from the husband, who still holds the letter which his wife wrote when she left him.

In *The Cranes are Flying*, the heroine learns that her fiancé has enlisted in the army at the outbreak of war. Her immediate reaction is one of bitterness: "What about me? I suppose I don't count?" Intending to remain faithful to him, she finally gives way to what is more or less rape by her fiancé's cousin. Again, personal conflicts find no simple resolution.

2

While the Soviet cinema is rediscovering the merits of more individual and human characterisation, greater depth of psychological motivation, it is also looking more discerningly and accurately at contemporary life. *The Cranes are Flying* gives us a fairly realistic view of the interior of some Soviet homes, though there are apparent efforts to make circumstances look rather more materially comfortable and attractive than reports from Russia have suggested. (One doubts, for instance, whether a family of four would have had a large Moscow apartment to themselves just before World War Two.) All the same, the film still gives us a fair impression of the Soviet citizen's daily life, a picture which rings true in detail. When the son of the family goes off to war, his old grandmother makes the sign of the Cross over him. The gesture is taken very much for granted, accepted by the other people in the scene as the grandmother intended it; there are no snide inferences of 'opium of the people' or 'grandmother's dotage'. A small incident, this remains in its context an encouraging one.

Another mark of the Soviet advance in these new films is that people's problems find no easy and happy last reel solutions. In *Spring in Zarechnaia Street*, for instance, a young schoolteacher is sent from Moscow to a new industrial town to give evening classes to the workers in reading and writing. One of her pupils falls in love with her, but is so clumsy in his attentions that she is antagonised. Eventually she notices him and is attracted, but in the end nothing comes of their love. They are too far apart in education and interests and the film closes on a note of frustration. There is no suggestion that once the worker really learns to read and write he will also share the teacher's liking for symphony concerts, that they will be able to meet on the same ground.

Our Court, one of the best examples of this new Soviet realism, comes from a Georgian director, Rezo Tchkeidze. The story is fast moving, full of life, energy, sunshine and optimism. It tells of daily life in a large apartment house in Tiflis. Nothing of great importance happens, but the film reflects the tragi-comedies of urban existence: flirtations, jealousies, arguments, misfortunes, marriage, moving away. It is rather reminiscent of Luciano Emmer's *Sunday in August* or Castellani's *Two Pennyworth of Hope*.

Comparable to *Our Court* is *The House Where I Live*, a long, honestly told family saga, rather in the spirit of a solid 19th century novel, which was shown at the Brussels Festival. The film follows the story of a family from its arrival at a new housing estate in 1935 to the end of World War Two. Interlinked with the family story are those of their neighbours, the geologist and his wife, and of a comparatively well-to-do family with artistic pretensions. The geologist's wife and the would-be actress daughter of the prosperous family are both sensitively played by two very attractive young actresses. And the various family relationships—between father and son, mother and father, mother and son—are handled well and simply. The mother whose teenage son goes off to the Stalingrad front is not a resolutely heroic symbolic figure but a deeply disturbed human creature, terrified at the thought



"The Forty-First": Izolda Izvitskaya as the Red Army sniper who falls in love with a White officer.

of losing her only son so soon after her husband's death. The emotion is true because it is specific, not generalised.

The essence of this current trend in Soviet cinema, aesthetically speaking, appears to be the reintegration of lyricism with realism. For many years, in the name of socialist realism, a dry and sterile view imposed itself. The great talents—Dovzhenko, Donskoi, Pudovkin—to some extent escaped, but generally speaking the camera was an instrument used simply and unimaginatively to record reality. Now, by contrast, a positive creative frenzy has seized certain Russian directors. They have gone back to the great silent Soviet cinema as a source of inspiration, are again making use of the stylistic elements which gave beauty to *Potemkin*, *Mother*, and the rest, of the techniques of montage and camera movement, of superimpositions and visual symbols. In short, they seem increasingly aware of the whole vast range of potentialities available to them. The results may on occasion be extravagant—as in *The Cranes are Flying*, which seems at times like a curious fusion of Jean Vigo and Italian neo-realism. But the very desire of these directors to experiment, to throw over the traces, is itself exciting.

It is impossible to tell where this new found freedom and concern for experiment may carry the Soviet film-makers. Some of their productions still have by Western standards a slightly dated look, resembling perhaps a good Marcel Carné film of the 'thirties. The Russians have yet to produce anything to compare with the visuals of the Polish *Kanal* or the Hungarian *A Sunday Romance*. It is conceivable that within the next year or so, as they are exposed to American and to more European films, they will extract from them elements which may prove fruitful in their own creative work. At any rate, the Soviet advance, first noted a couple of years ago, seems still to be continuing.



A scene from Kalatazov's "The Cranes are Flying".

The Horse's Mouth

Scenes from the screen version of
Joyce Cary's novel about
a penniless artist,
produced by Knightsbridge Films
for United Artists release.
Alec Guinness, who plays the
leading part, has himself
done the screen adaptation;
the film is produced
by John Bryan and directed
by Ronald Neame.



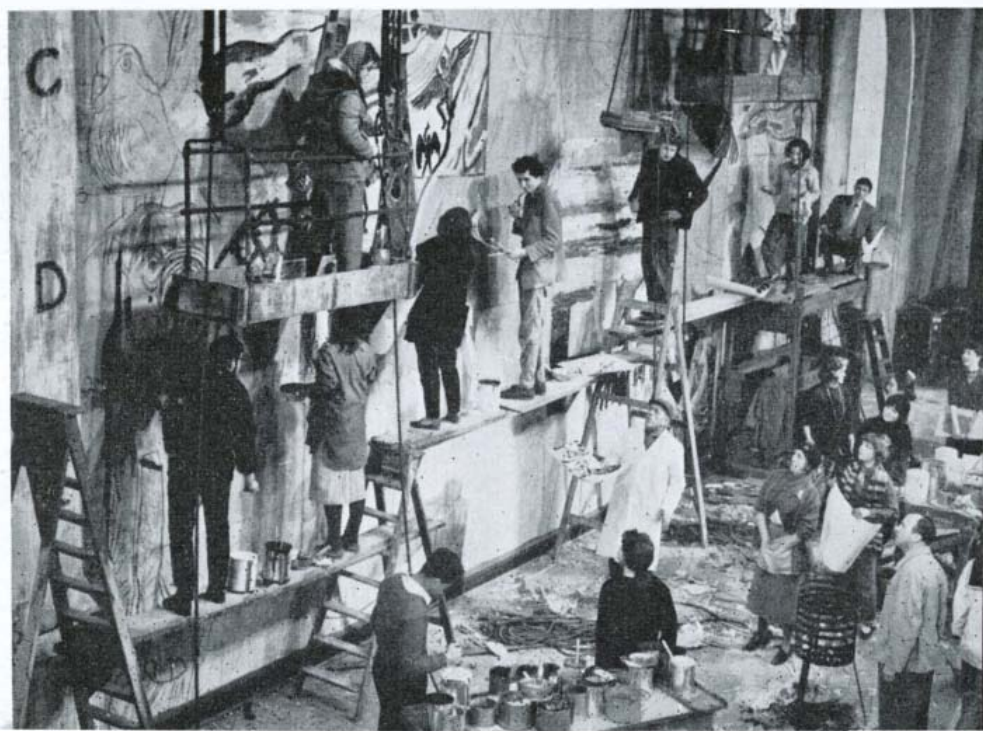


Top left: Gulley Jimson (Alec Guinness) and the sculptor Abel (Michael Gough) survey a hole left in the floor by a large block of granite.

Left: Gulley Jimson is suspiciously regarded by a policeman on the embankment.

Above: The unit waiting for the sun while on location outside Wormwood Scrubs prison.

Right: Students being directed by Ronald Neame (right) in painting a huge mural. Alec Guinness and Kay Walsh are among the onlookers.





Paris shop window: 1930

The 'intense isolation'

JAMES CARD

of LOUISE BROOKS

"MORE than Garbo, the Louise Brooks face, the eyes, the hair, cut *à la* Jeanne d'Arc, and her smile.

"Those who have seen her can never forget her. She is the modern actress par excellence because, like the statues of antiquity, she is outside of time.

"It is sufficient to see her to believe in beauty, in life, in the reality of human beings; she has the naturalness that only primitives retain before the lens. . .

"She is the intelligence of the cinematographic process, she is the most perfect incarnation of photogenie; she embodies in herself all that the cinema rediscovered in its last years of silence: complete naturalness and complete simplicity.

"Her art is so pure that it becomes invisible."

These notes appeared in the catalogue of the Cinémathèque Française exhibition "60 Ans de Cinéma", arranged by Henri Langlois in 1955. They concerned Louise Brooks' contribution to Pabst's *The Diary of a Lost Girl*. If this estimate seems to drift in the direction of extravagance, in what category can one place the enthusiasm of the critic Ado Kyrou, expressed in his recent book *Amour-Erotisme et Cinéma*? "Louise Brooks is the only woman who had the ability to transfigure—no matter what film—into a masterpiece . . . the poetry of Louise is the great poetry of rare loves, of magnetism at high tension, of feminine beauty as blinding as ten galaxial suns. Louise is the perfect apparition, the dream-woman, the being without whom the cinema would be a poor thing. She is much more than a myth, she is a magical presence, a real phantom, the magnetism of the cinema.

"Her vivid beauty, her absolutely unique acting (I do not know of a greater tragedienne of the screen) predisposed her to the top rank. Not one woman exerted more magic, not one had her genius of interpretation. Nevertheless she disappeared in 1931 in a manner altogether inexplicable, at the age of twenty-four. . ."

It is doubtful whether any film star—even Vola Vale or Marin Sais—is more completely forgotten in the United States than Louise Brooks. When she is remembered at all, it is usually only to confuse her with Colleen Moore or with *The Cat and the Canary*. Her disappearance from the public mind is particularly paradoxical when one realises that Louise Brooks appeared in twenty-one American films, in nine of which she played the leading role. Of her three European pictures, only *Pandora's Box* was shown in the United States and that was brutally mutilated and narrowly restricted in its circulation—a silent film unseen in the period of new excitement over talkies.

One of those haunted by the Louise Brooks face ("plus que Garbo") ever since 1928 and *A Girl in Every Port*, I made a futile search in New York City where, according to one vague report, she was selling dresses in a department store. In 1953, a look at *Pandora's Box* at the Cinémathèque Française spurred me to renew the hunt. I learned that Lothar Wolff, who produced *Martin Luther* for Louis de Rochemont, knew the whereabouts of Louise Brooks. (In 1929, Wolff had been a wild-haired, bright-faced young publicity man for Pabst.) Late in 1943, Wolff had brought Louise Brooks together with Richard Griffith, of the Museum of Modern Art, to talk about Pabst. Griffith, at least, might have her address.

But not until I returned from Henri Langlois'

astonishing exhibition in 1955 did it seem imperative to let Louise Brooks know that, after twenty-five years in limbo, Paris had restored her to stardom.

At this point Eastman House* was visited by a film person from New York who had seen Louise Brooks quite frequently in recent years. His portrait of her and his picture of her life was as dismal as anything in the dreary confessions of Lillian Roth and Diana Barrymore. According to this New Yorker, Louise Brooks had retired, quite literally, and rarely left her gloomy one-room apartment located within the forbidding shadow of the grimy old Queensboro Bridge on Manhattan's lower East Side. Bitterness and despair had allegedly wrecked her beauty and the abortive consolation of the bottle ruined her figure. On the few occasions when she stirred out of this black cave of forgetfulness, it was only to hurry grimly over to Glennon's Bar on Third Avenue, clad in a long black overcoat which she never removed out of shame for her bloated body. A furious, baleful look repulsed any acquaintances of the past who might have encountered her on one of these excursions.

At Glennon's she stood at the bar, her hair long and streaked with gray, reaching to her shoulders. Above the bar there is a framed photograph of Louise Brooks by Steichen. One of the Glennon regulars long ago clipped it from a 1929 issue of *Vanity Fair*. The caption under the photograph reads: "The Rise of Louise Brooks: stranger than fiction is the metamorphosis of Miss Louise Brooks, once of the Scandals and currently of the cinema . . . long before her sultry Cleopatra bangs had created the head-dress known as 'a Louise Brooks', this diminutive actress was touring the hinterlands as a young, callow dancer of the Denishawn troupe. After that her progress was swift. George White's Scandals, the Café de Paris of London, the Ziegfeld Follies as a featured dancer. . ."

My informant was pessimistic about the chances of persuading Louise Brooks out of her retreat. "You look at her face," he told me, "and think—this is a woman who is just waiting to kill herself." Then I wrote to Louise Brooks, telling her what I thought of her Pabst performances and what was being said by others in France, Denmark, Belgium, Italy, Great Britain—wherever her films were being restored to the screen by the various archives and film societies. I asked her the usual initial questions of the film historian: "What was your first picture? How did you happen to begin film acting?" and similar inanities.

This was her answering letter:—

"The mystery of life . . . that you should, after almost thirty years, bring me the first joy I ever tasted from my movie career. It's like throwing away a mask. All these years making fun of myself with everyone overjoyed to agree . . . away all false humility forever!

"You see, they had to hog-tie me in the first place to make me go into pictures. From 15 to 17 I had danced with Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, then I went to work for Ziegfeld who was going to star me, when older and 'wiser' friends literally forced me into pictures. . . They didn't know what to do with me, I fitted nowhere, so they decided that I was a lousy actress. I, who would be the *best* at everything I did, so vain. After the day I

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went into the projection room with Walter Wanger and the director to see my second picture (*A Social Celebrity*), and they laughed and kidded me about my acting, I vowed that I would never see another picture that I was in—and I never have, not even my pictures made in Europe.

"So it went, from bathing suit to ballet skirt till talkies came in. And G. W. Pabst wanted me for *Lulu*. And my option came up. And I was deservedly detested and detesting. Schulberg said that they wouldn't give me the salary boost my contract called for because they didn't know how I'd 'talk', which was ridiculous as we both knew . . . I could stay on at the same salary or quit.

"So I went to Germany and, of course, adored and worshipped Mr. Pabst. Usually as mean and snarling as a wild cat, I sat up for him and wagged my tail like a little dog.

"Funny thing, or rather not, because he was brilliant, Mr. Pabst knew that I would never go back to Hollywood after working with him. First, he tried to get me to stay, go live with a German family to learn the language and work there. No, I was an Amurikin. Then, on the last day of the picture, he let me have it. He was sore at me anyway. We were outside, working at a grave dug behind a little café. And when he was ready for me I was off riding a borrowed bicycle round the block in me widow's weeds with me veil flying. So, when the scenes were finished and we were sitting having coffee alone at a little table, he told me that my rich friends (meaning all the Riviera crowd that he detested) would play with me and throw me away straight to hell. That the story of *Lulu* was *my* story. And I just sat there and glared at him. (And he came so near to being right that I shudder now a little, thinking of it.)

"I came back to New York and I would *not* do *Bad Girl*, and, far, far worse, I would *not* for the whole Paramount studio go back to the conversion of *Canary Murder Case* into a talkie. It cost them a lot of money, reshooting, re-cutting, dubbing in another voice. And Paramount got together with the other studios and they stuck the knife in me and they've never taken it out."

2

Miss Brooks, I learned to my delight, was willing to grant an interview to so nebulous a creature as a film curator. The horror story that had been told me about Louise Brooks, I immediately discovered, was only superficially true—which is to say that it was not true at all. She received me barefooted, dressed in a nightgown and a faded, well-scrubbed Chinese robe, then promptly returned to bed, where, she admitted, she spent roughly eighty per cent of her time. Of the memorable Brooks visage there remained the exquisite profile and, incredibly, that piquant eyebrow-and-a-half.

What I had been prepared to enter as a dungeon turned out to be a kind of shrine consecrated to cleanliness—Freudian perhaps—but for whatever reason, the room was a perpetual battleground against the oily grime that is unique to Manhattan. And on the walls, three paintings by Miss Brooks that looked not at all symptomatic of suicide. One in particular, an oil of St. Thérèse, I would be tempted to describe with the same ardent energy M. Langlois used in his catalogue notes about Louise Brooks.

As for Glennon's—it is a bar that used to be haunted by Robert Benchley and Humphrey Bogart. Among its habitués there are still folk of the theatre and the press who

Above: Louise Brooks in "*The Canary Murder Case*" (1929); below: in "*Love Em and Leave Em*" (1926).

knew the Louise Brooks of the George White and Ziegfeld era.

It was the work of several months to persuade an actress, then about to turn fifty, to come to Eastman House in Rochester and see the pictures she made when she was twenty-two. The result was quite unlooked for. I had dreamed that, once confronted by the overwhelming evidence of her own effectiveness, Louise Brooks would at last succumb to the lure of the 'comeback trail' that has brought Lila Lee, Mary Astor and Bette Davis to face the television cameras.

Instead of falling in love with herself, she became suddenly enraptured with motion pictures; she had never seriously looked at one in all her adult life. We screened scores of films for her: masterpieces and monstrosities. Having seen, for the first time, the end results of her own work, she became engrossed in the whole problem of acting in relation to what she already knew so well—the hazards that mitigated against any kind of worthwhile achievement in pictures.

These screenings have continued for a period of two and a half years. They are always supplemented with discussions marked by Brooksonian analysis so penetrating and often so startling in its freshness of view that our curatorial dogma has been severely bruised.

When Henri Langlois came to visit her in Rochester last year, he was not the least surprised to discover that Louise Brooks knew nearly all of Proust by heart (as I had been surprised that her copies of John Stuart Mill, Goethe, Ruskin,

Shaw and St. Bernard were dog-eared and super-annotated by herself). For Langlois, Louise Brooks turned out to be not a whit more nor less of an extraordinary being than he had expected.

As an historian forever carping about the paucity of film writing with just minimal doses of truth and authenticity, I encouraged Miss Brooks, with her obsession for veracity, to get down in print some of the observations churned up by our post-screening arguments. She had already written her memoirs ("to understand about writing—just as I had taken up painting—to understand it") and thrown the whole manuscript, titled "Naked on My Goat", down the incinerator. She finally began a book to be called "Thirteen Women in Films", about the acting and the pictures of those she knew best, including Clara Bow, Greta Garbo, Marion Davies and Norma Shearer. In a letter to Rex O'Malley, asking him about his work with Garbo in *Camille*, she described her book: "It is a study of extraordinary, uniquely beautiful women and the success with which they preserved their originality of face and personality against the vicious grinding of the producers who would reduce them to a commodity as uniform, as interchangeable, as expendable and cheap as canned peas."

The sordid story of the conspiracy of the film industry against art and artists, the constant search for a way to bring art to heel and chain it to an assembly line, is, of course, the history of motion pictures. It is also the history of Louise Brooks' "lost years" so puzzling to all those who, like

Pabst's "Diary of a Lost Girl" (1929).



Ado Kyrou, have speculated about her disappearance at the very height of adulation in Europe which—at the time of *Prix de Beauté*—filled at least one Paris shop window with nothing but a profusion of Louise Brooks photographs.

Only Dostoievsky collaborating with Budd Schulberg could tell the story of Louise Brooks from 1930 to 1955. The last years of that time—from 1948 to 1955—were the period of full retreat. “I had crept to a hole to find out what I had become and how to find the way back to what I was.”

In the middle of 1930 her close friend, Peggy Fears, formerly of the Follies and then married to the late financial wizard A. C. Blumenthal, persuaded Columbia Pictures to offer Louise Brooks a \$500 a week contract. Told to report to Jack Cohn in the New York office of Columbia, Miss Brooks waited an hour in the outer office—an experience totally unique in her career. Rather than be late for a date with Winston Guest to watch him exercise his polo ponies, she left Cohn’s office without signing her contract—an event totally unique in the careers of the brothers Cohn, Jack and Harry.

When she arrived in Hollywood, still without a contract, by way of discipline Harry Cohn cut her salary in half but granted her the privilege of sitting every afternoon in his office while he, conducting the affairs of Columbia Pictures sans either shirt or undershirt, sat at his desk presenting to all who entered the perspiring apparition of an executive who seemed to be quite uncharmingly naked.

Every cliché about Hollywood is disgustingly true. Naive and well-disposed folk are eager to disbelieve the hackneyed plot of California casting techniques; the usual excuse of the failure, that she was too chaste or too discriminating to

succeed, is a tired and tasteless yarn.

But for Louise Brooks, formerly of the Follies and the Scandals, to disdain falling into the indicated pattern, could only goad a top studio executive to savage retribution. It came first in the form of clapping a wig on Louise Brooks and testing her for a part in a Buck Jones Western. Her refusal brought a telephone call to her home from the studio head himself—the call, an ultimatum: wear the wig, play the Western, or Louise Brooks is finished. But the message was delivered to her mother; Miss Brooks would not come to the telephone.

She went back to New York to seek the doubtful comfort of her wealthy friends in the endless repetition of their night-club lives. Seven years later, back in Hollywood and with Pabst’s predictions proving quite accurate, she was without money and desperate for a job. Harry Cohn was able to take his revenge. Fully believing that she would refuse, he offered her a test for a lead with the condition that she first agree to work as an extra in the dancing chorus of a Grace Moore musical. She did not refuse. Columbia released dozens of stills showing Louise in the chorus; and the publicity department captions on them spoke volumes. “Louise Brooks, former screen star, who deserted Hollywood seven years ago at the height of her career, has come back to resume her work in pictures. But, seven years is too long for the public to remember and Louise courageously begins again at the bottom.” And another: “Louise Brooks, former star, threw pride aside and resumed her career as a ballet dancer in Grace Moore’s current picture.”

In January of 1943, she returned to New York City. She found intermittent work in radio, in publicity offices and finally as a salesgirl, until 1948. Then began her almost complete seclusion of First Avenue. In 1953 Louise Brooks was baptised a Roman Catholic.

About this time the world began to rediscover her films, and two years later she herself became aware for the first time that the motion picture provided a medium worthy of all that anyone could bring it. The Danish Film Museum invited her to Copenhagen where they were showing *Beggars of Life*. In Paris, the Cinémathèque Française arranged a memorable reception for her shortly after the showing of *Pandora’s Box*. Glowing happily, surrounded by flowers and compliments, her coiffure drawn sleekly back in classic simplicity that gives all emphasis to an ageless profile, she received the German, Hungarian, Japanese and Brazilian admirers who were present to greet her, along with such old American acquaintances as Tom Curtiss, and new ones like Fred Zinnemann.

Louise Brooks wrote: “The great art of films does not consist of descriptive movement of face and body but in the movements of thought and soul transmitted in a kind of intense isolation.”

That kind of isolation has always been hers. And from the day that the preservation of great films began, the petty plotting of small and selfish men, to wipe out the record of beauty and truth that has sometimes been achieved in spite of them, was forever frustrated. The return of Louise Brooks to the screens of the world is a portent: the art of the film has its own immortality.



1957: Louise Brooks photographed during a visit to the Danish Film Museum in Copenhagen.

Two cents on the Rouble

by RICHARD ROUD



Up in Central Park . . . Yul Brynner and Maria Schell in "The Brothers Karamazov."

DURING the past few years Hollywood has come to rely more than ever on novels as the basis for screenplays; and more and more, it seems, on great or near-great novels. The chief reason for this, one supposes, is that the result will be to some extent pre-so'd. That is, a film made from a famous novel is less of an unknown quantity to the filmgoer, and, on the positive side, it provides an extra attraction . . . "Millions read the best-selling novel . . ." Those who have not read it go to the film to catch up; those who have go to see what 'they' have done with it. There is probably the prestige angle as well. If Marilyn Monroe burned to play Grushenka (and would that her wish had been granted), Richard Brooks seemed no less eager to try his hand at "the great Russian classic". Martin Ritt, director of *The Long, Hot Summer*, appears to be particularly interested in Faulkner, and has announced his intention to film *The Sound and the Fury*.

So artistic and commercial motives unite to explain the present spate of films made from great novels. The history of the cinema, however, is littered with hundreds of bad films made from great novels—*Anna Karenina* (both versions), Christian Jaque's *Chartreuse de Parme*, Minnelli's *Madame Bovary*. Here and there a success comes along—Lean's *Great Expectations*, Autant-Lara's *Le Diable au Corps*. But they would seem to be the exceptions that prove the rule. By and large it is a very tricky business, and three recent films—*The Brothers Karamazov*, *A Farewell to Arms*, and *The Long, Hot Summer*—illustrate just how tricky it is. They provide a convenient point of departure for a consideration of the problems involved.

The Brothers Karamazov raises the most obvious difficulties—an American film made in 1957 of a Russian novel written in 1880. It seems like an impossible venture. One can hardly imagine the Russians making a convincing film about American small-town life in the 1880's. And indeed Richard Brooks' film is entirely unconvincing on this basic level.

But the main problem in filming *The Brothers Karamazov*

is the theme of the novel; the search for faith, the search for God. The three brothers personify ideas, but Dostoevsky has treated them so realistically that we can accept them as human beings. All three are essential to the theme; Alyosha (Alexei) embodies the religious spirit in contact with sin, emerging triumphant over unbelief; Dmitri is the brother most tainted by the Karamazov strain of carnal sensuality, but the evil in him is transcended by his capacity to suffer and repent. Like Father Zossima, he perceives that the individual must share the guilt and suffering of others. Ivan embodies the idea of the purely rational being whose reason leads him into evil and a denial of God; in some ways he is the most important of them all and his dialogue with Father Zossima was considered by Dostoevsky to be the philosophical and artistic crown of the book.

There is much more to the novel than this, but this is essential; and very little of it comes through in the film. The whole work is thrown off balance by the virtual suppression of Father Zossima, the reduction of Alyosha's part, and the inflation of Snegiryov's. Ivan is reduced to some dark looks and a few words on good and evil which seem, in the context of the film, almost gratuitous. What is left is the story of Dmitri, Katya, and Grushenka. But even this is attenuated by the inexpressive face of Yul Brynner, the Chelsea refinement of Claire Bloom, and the relentless inanity of Maria Schell's smile. Furthermore Dostoevsky's conception of Dmitri is completely modified by altering the end of the novel. In the film Dmitri and Grusha, to the sound of jubilant church bells, escape to 'freedom' and happiness somewhere across some border. This is like the 18th century adaptations of *King Lear*, and it makes nonsense of Dmitri's expressed desire to suffer and expiate his own guilt as well as that of others:—

If I ran away, even with money and a passport, and even to America, I should be cheered by the thought that I am not running away to pleasure, not for happiness, but to another



Literary heroines. Left: Maria Schell and Claire Bloom in "The Brothers Karamazov." Right: Jennifer Jones and Rock Hudson in "A Farewell to Arms."

exile as bad, perhaps, as Siberia . . . I hate that America, damn it, already. Even though Grusha will be with me . . . And how shall I put up with the rabble out there, though they may be better than I, every one of them? I hate that America already! machinery, of my soul.

Although one could hardly expect to see this speech retained intact, something could have been done to suggest that Grusha and Dmitri were not going to live happily ever after.

Richard Brooks was aware of the problems of reducing the book to film dimensions. He has said that, although reluctantly forced to cut, telescope, and simplify, he has tried to depict Dostoevsky's exact meaning and intention: "We think what he intended is in the film . . . *The Brothers Karamazov* is *not* in CinemaScope. It is *not* big from side to side. But it *is*, I hope, boundless *within*! It *is* Dostoevsky."

Unfortunately, that is just what it is not. Like the man who bought up Dmitri's debts, Brooks only gives us "two cents on the rouble". It is difficult to think of a director who *could* make a 145-minute version of this novel, but most are humble enough, or intelligent enough, to realise the impossibility of the task, and have left it alone. Richard Brooks has not filmed Dostoevsky, nor has he given us an effective film. Despite all attempts to give depth to his watered-down version—symbolic use of colour, "profound" moments

(also achieved by music)—the uninspired direction and bad casting (Lee J. Cobb turns father Karamazov into a Second Avenue ham) make this a film that will appeal neither to lovers of Dostoevsky nor to lovers of good films. Unlike the Editor of *Films in Review*, I do not think that Hollywood should be encouraged to make pictures like this, for they serve no useful end. To say that it will bring a knowledge of Dostoevsky and a desire to read him to people who have never heard of him is utterly specious; it will more probably have the opposite effect.

2

Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* would seem to be a much easier proposition. The novel deals largely with Americans and is set only about forty years ago. It is not weighted with philosophy and the principle roles present no great acting problems. Ben Hecht's screenplay is more faithful to the novel than Brooks' was to Dostoevsky. To be sure, the character of Rinaldi has been cleaned up. He has also added a lot of hospital humour, built up the priest, and played down the pacifism of the original. Henry deserts to escape being shot as a spy; in the book it is also because he no longer believes in what he is supposed to be fighting for. This Hecht and Vidor do not bring out.

But there is a problem here which does not arise with Dostoevsky. Since Henry James, American novelists have been particularly interested in the point of view from which they tell their stories. Percy Lubbock, a disciple of James, summed this up in his influential book, *The Craft of Fiction* (1921):—

The whole intricate question of method in the craft of fiction I take to be governed by the question of the *point of view*—the question of the relation in which the narrator stands to the story.

Hemingway, in *A Farewell to Arms*, tells the story from the point of view of the hero; everything is seen through his eyes. We do not get an epic view of the war on the Italian front: we get Frederick Henry's view, coloured by his personality, ideas, and character. Hemingway has written a *récit*, and Charles Vidor and Ben Hecht have tried to make an epic out of it. They have failed because their material is not epic. The novel begins . . .

In the late summer of that year we lived in a house in a village that looked across the river and the plain to the mountains.

The film begins with a long shot from the mountains which gradually moves closer and closer across the plain to the town and then to the figure of Henry—exactly the reverse of

the novel. The result of this reversal is that the outside world, the scenery, the local colour, predominates over the inside world which is the novel's concern—the mind of Henry. Attempting to blow the novel up to epic proportions, Vidor has added countless scenes of troops moving in picturesque diagonals up and down the Alps to the accompaniment of folk songs. All this is irrelevant. There is even a particularly extravagant scene where a hospital ward goes up in flames while a priest leads the men in singing *Ave Maria*.

Similar mistakes were made in the film of *The Sun also Rises*. In the novel the story is seen through Jake Barnes' eyes; in the film we are shown it through Mr. Henry King's eyes instead. Admittedly it is difficult to make a film where the apprehension of reality is conditioned by the character of the narrator. But it can be done—Bresson's *Journal d'un Curé de Campagne* and *Un Condamné à Mort s'est Echappé*, or Astruc's *Le Rideau Cramoisi*. The directors of *The Sun also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms* do not even seem to have recognised the existence of the problem. For them it is a case of a good mixture of plot and European backgrounds, never mind whether they destroy the mood. As for casting, the films cost a lot of money, so sure-fire stars are necessary . . . If only a Hemingway novel could be filmed on a small budget, in black and white and preferably by a young director, then we might perhaps get something that remotely approached Hemingway and a good film. Just as in *The Brothers Karamazov*, betrayal of the author has dislocated the film, possibly because writers and directors have not gone far enough. If they had had the courage to pay less attention to the material they were adapting, they might have got better results.

This is what has been done with Faulkner in *The Long, Hot Summer*. Announced as an adaptation of two Faulkner stories (*Barn Burning* and *Spotted Horses*) and a novel (*The Hamlet*), it in fact takes little more from Faulkner than the rise of the determined Flem Snopes (called Ben Quick in the film) aided by Will Varner, lord of Frenchman's Bend. Bits have been taken from *Barn Burning* and Books One and Two of *The Hamlet*: but nothing has been used from *The Long Summer*, the third Book . . . A pity because one would have enjoyed seeing what they would have done with the story of Ike H-mope, Snopes' idiot brother, and the tragic consequences of his romance with a cow.

The story of Ben's relentless climb to success obviously does not furnish enough material for a feature film; something had to be added. Varner is provided with a daughter—Clara (played by Joanne Woodward). Perhaps influenced by the resemblance between Paul Newman (who plays Snopes/Quick) and Marlon Brando, she has been turned into a Blanche Dubois figure. Furthermore she has been supplied with a sensitive but ineffectual young man—like Blanche's first husband. The parallel comes out most clearly in Clara's big scene with Quick at the picnic. Trying to persuade her to marry him, he assures her that the morning after the wedding she will wake up smiling (he too, presumably, knows how to get those coloured lights going). Her reply also resembles Blanche's: she wants a lot more than sex, and she has got a lot more to give—culture, charm, conversation. But here, in a catastrophic last reel, Clara (unlike Blanche) does a complete about-face. We are expected to believe that she has been so touched by Quick's account of his unhappy childhood that she wants to marry him.

Secondly, no doubt as a result of the popularity of father-son themes, Jody's role has been greatly built up. In the novel, he is 'passed' by Flem, but this doesn't particularly bother him; in fact nothing bothers him except the fear that his sister's honour will be compromised—which it is. But here he is changed into the familiar misunderstood,

unwanted son and he even tries to incinerate his father in the burning barn. When he relents and unlocks the door Varner is so touched, and so pleased that his son had the gumption to try to burn him up, that they are completely reconciled . . . "You've got Hell-fire and redemption, too; I've got me a son again."

There is nothing wrong with adding to one's original material—so long as the various elements mix. Here they do not; Faulkner's story of the invasion in the 1880's of the horrible, money-grubbing Snopeses does not go well with a Tennessee Williams story of genteel aristocracy up against the meat-eaters of the world. Nor does it fit well with a misunderstood son begging for the affection he never got . . . "Am I your son or ain't I? You ain't never been a poppa to me."

Nevertheless, this is the best of the three adaptations because, on its own terms, it is the best film. Ritt has, through his intelligent direction of Joanne Woodward, rendered credible and touching the rather *démodé* character of Clara. The scene when Clara and Agnes discuss their lack of beaux, with Clara's conclusion: "Don't worry. Tranquillisers maybe will see us through", sums up all the half-mocking despair of two girls who have almost given up hope. Also the relationship between the oversexed (or under-occupied) Jody and his wife (admirably played by Lee Remick) is very well done. In some ways Ritt is the most sophisticated of the younger directors. As in *No Down Payment*, he is at his best in intimate scenes, but clumsy with crowds. He does wonders when he has only two people to deal with and his handling of conjugal bedroom scenes is particularly sensitive.

What conclusions can be drawn, apart from the suggestion that American directors leave European classics alone? Can one say that films adapted from novels ought to depart as far as possible from their originals? Unless the director is in sympathy with his novel, and intellectually equipped for adapting it, the answer would seem to be Yes. Since it seems one cannot have good Faulkner and good Ritt, it would be preferable to have at least good Ritt. The best American adaptations seem to be from good, but not great novels—*Magnificent Ambersons*, *Grapes of Wrath*, *The Oxbow Incident* (*Strange Incident*)—which are less intimidating. The director feels less bound to be faithful to them and is able to express himself more freely. Perhaps, also, these novels leave more scope for the director. A great novel is a complete and perfect entity; it leaves very little for a director to do—except the one thing that most directors are incapable of doing, that is, to translate it into cinematographic terms.



More Ritt than Faulkner: Anthony Franciosa and Lee Remick in "The Long, Hot Summer."

Film Reviews

ORDERS TO KILL and THE YOUNG LIONS

WITH the unceasing flood of war films still pouring from the studios, the campaign records, the stories of Resistance heroines, submarine commanders, soft-centred Nazis, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the artist who wants to adapt the conventions of the war picture to make some statement of his own. The whole territory is now so thoroughly sign-posted that the film-maker's temptation is to avoid the conventional theme at the risk of choosing the too special case. We have moved on from straightforward prisoner-of-war heroism to the distorted 'heroics' of a Colonel Nicholson; and in Anthony Asquith's *Orders to Kill* (British Lion) we have a secret agent melodrama whose implicit pacifist statement is made the harder to disentangle because of the special circumstances of the story.

Orders to Kill is supposedly based on fact. It invites us to swallow two fairly formidable assumptions: that a Resistance organisation, faced with the problem of liquidating a traitor, should have no-one available for the job and should set out from scratch to train a bomber pilot as an assassin; and that, despite doubts about his fitness for the assignment, they should still persist in his training. Once past these two hurdles, which the film does not make easier to cross by the rather prosaic and heavily-documented handling of the early scenes, the ground is clear for a central episode which is both action thriller and an investigation of conscience. The supposed traitor is a gentle little Parisian lawyer, a friendly, ineffectual man who lets his wife bully him, befriends strangers and stray cats, and is so transparently innocent that if this were a Hitchcock thriller we could be confident of his guilt. The amateur assassin, disarmed and conscience-stricken, seeks the advice of a professional agent and is told that his job is to kill and not to judge. He does kill, appallingly bungling the murder so that his victim has the chance of a last, accusing stare and a mumbled "why?"

It is this question, asked in a scene of genuinely horrifying savagery, that the film sets out to investigate. The bomber pilot is dramatically driven to recognise the difference between dispatching his victims at long range, from the air, and coming face to face with a man he intends to murder. That the man may in fact be innocent seems just an ironic turn of the screw. The denouement, after the killer has recovered from a drinking bout and faced the need to come to terms with his conscience, makes the victim's innocence a pivotal point: war, the film seems to be saying, is terrible because the innocent are killed. How they are killed in the long run ceases greatly to matter, since it is all a part of the larger crime of war.

But the director, Anthony Asquith, and the writer, Paul Dehn, have allowed the film to end on equivocation rather than statement. The final scene, in which the murderer visits his victim's widow, gives her his own back pay as conscience-money and tells her that her husband was "a colleague of mine", can be taken in altogether too many ways, none of them satisfactory. A final (and cheap) irony; a gesture of redemption; a sign that the pilot can now live with his conscience—the scene could be any of these. But as the music swells up and the camera rests on Paul Massie's not noticeably tortured face, one has the feeling that the episode's main justification is that the film should not end on a note too obviously down-beat.

It is because *Orders to Kill* has to do with moral responsibility that this final shirking of issues on the film's part matters. After the slow start—Lillian Gish in a very minor part as the pilot's mother,

a series of establishing scenes at service headquarters, a long training sequence given an edge by the deliberate tone of matter-of-fact brutality—the film reaches its climax in two or three key scenes. The first is a staccato dialogue between the amateur agent, just beginning to separate game from reality, and the woman who gives him his final orders to kill. Irene Worth plays this part tensely, theatrically and with a quality of nervous vitality that is very compelling: the scene is hers and she makes it forceful. Then comes the murder itself and the hero's realisation that he has crossed the line separating the soldier from the killer. These scenes are the core of the film; and Paul Massie, whose inexperience otherwise puts him at a disadvantage, here comes closest to conveying the full weight of his situation. Asquith has chosen to follow these climactic episodes with a montage sequence of mounting hysteria which in this context looks old-fashioned; and from here on the film runs mainly downhill.

But *Orders to Kill* has a theme and a point, is not simply using the war as background. Its central episodes are well constructed in Paul Dehn's script, and Asquith retains the thriller momentum without losing sight of the conflict of nerve and conscience that drives the reluctant killer on to murder. The film is at its best when most dramatically direct and concentrated.

Concentration is precisely what is lacking in *The Young Lions* (Fox), adapted by Edward Anhalt from Irwin Shaw's novel and directed by Edward Dmytryk. Here again a part of the theme is revulsion against the senseless cruelties of war. The ending achieves its irony when the German officer, having broken his own gun in pieces, is shot down by two Americans who have just glimpsed the full horror of war in a Nazi concentration camp. *En route* to this final confrontation, the film pursues three separate stories: the cynical G.I. (Dean Martin), out to save his skin, is shamed by his fiancée into going to war; the Jew (Montgomery Clift) is put through a *From Here to Eternity* course of barrack-room brutalities; and the Nazi (Marlon Brando) discovers that he can neither kill a wounded man in cold blood nor evade his own share of the German guilt. This softening of the film's central character—in Irwin Shaw's novel war brutalises him, in the film it teaches him moral lessons—gives Marlon Brando the opportunity for a characteristic performance. Brando's favourite characterisation seems to be that of the man who starts out with one set of values and slowly yields to the realisation that there are others. Here, with a strikingly exact German accent, he gives a firm, easy performance.

What *The Young Lions* has to say about war and its effects on men amounts to a series of familiar incidents—training camp, home front, occupied Paris, battle episodes—elaborately strung together. Out of this sheer accumulation of material, one scene stands out: a sharply directed sequence in which the Germans ambush and slaughter a British patrol in the desert. But this is a production which relies on length and size to make up for a lack of imaginative grip. It moves with leaden efficiency from one character



"Orders to Kill": Paul Massie and Irene Worth.

to another, one country to another, a battle-canvas with no central point of focus.

Both these films are 'anti-war', at least to a degree; both are concerned with the morality of killing, the point at which the soldier begins to question his orders. But where *Paths of Glory* was an indictment, both *Orders to Kill* and *The Young Lions* retreat to compromise. In *The Young Lions*, compromise is part of the pattern: this is a very big production, made to capture world markets, and there are rules for commercial success which the film does not try to break. The more modest *Orders to Kill* might have gone further; it gives the impression of trying to combat war intellectually and of being uncertain precisely on what ground to take its stand. The little lawyer's "why" remains its unanswerable question.

PENELOPE HOUSTON

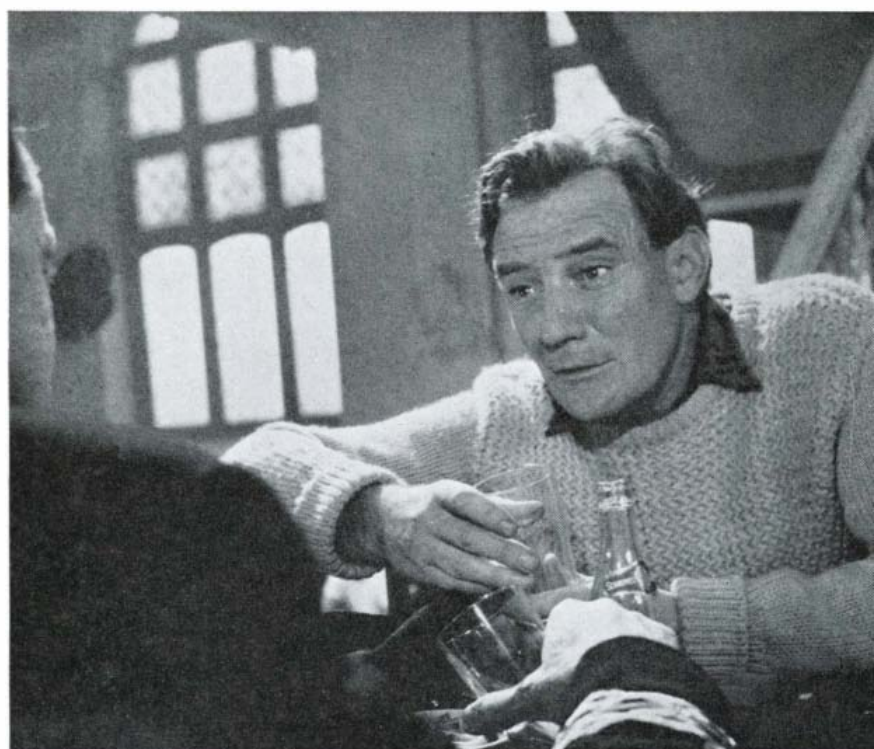
THE KEY

WITH this film Carol Reed is right back on form. It is the best thing he has done since that interesting but puzzling work *Outcast of the Islands*, which in certain aspects it resembles. Both films deal in a penetrating and disturbing way with the roots of human behaviour; and both films are weakened by ambiguities and uncertainties which can only arise from the basic conception as well as the shaping of the script. In the case of *The Key* (Columbia) this latter point may seem surprising, since the script is by one of the best living screenwriters, Carl Foreman, who also produced the film.

The story concerns in the first place a hitherto little-known activity of World War II—the teams of sea-going tugs which were sent out to rescue ships which had been damaged by aerial or U-boat attack and thus were left behind by their convoys. In the second place it deals with the life of certain tug-captains on shore in relation to a mysterious girl, whose flat becomes the refuge of one after another of them in turn—the key to her door being passed on from man to man only through the cancellation of death. The girl, Stella, had lost her first and only love the day before their wedding, and by some strange inner compulsion has continued to harbour and look after his successors. The main story here concerns two of the captains, Chris (Trevor Howard) and David (William Holden). Chris is the present incumbent of Stella's flat, and it is through David's eyes that we observe the strange situation outlined above. Let it be said at once that this is beautifully done by a succession of admirably contrived revelations. Chris is (inevitably) killed, and David (after a lot of doubt) moves in. A genuine love affair develops and Stella finds in him a substitute for her first love. But David, following the tradition, has passed on the duplicate key to someone else. He is falsely reported dead—and when he returns Stella feels he has betrayed her. She leaves for London; and the film ends with David just failing to get on to the train which is carrying her away. "I'll find her when I go to London" he says, and on this equivocal note the film ends.

Now all this is done with a certainty of touch, a sympathy, and a real sense of the tragi-comedy of War which can hardly be faulted. The trouble is that Stella and her relationships represent a different sort of "realism" from that of the violent actuality of the rescue scenes at sea, which are on a grand and convincing scale comparable with *Western Approaches*. At sea we have the world of *The Way Ahead*; on shore, the world of *Odd Man Out*. And they conflict. Indeed, once we are in Stella's flat we are almost as cut off as we were in Lukey's studio in *Odd Man Out* (the hall and staircase in *The Key* have a curious similarity to Lukey's); and the other shore episodes, in the horrible little hotel and the smoky, noisy service canteens, have much of the same elements as are found in *Odd Man Out*. This is high praise, and Reed's direction, with its meticulous attention to background detail, is impeccable. There is one scene in a crowded dance hall, in which Chris and David talk to each other in cross-cut close-ups, which is an object lesson both in direction and in the use of the CinemaScope screen. See it a second time, and watch the background action throughout.

But it remains difficult to reconcile these shore elements with the other half of the film; and the difficulty is increased by a suggestion of the supernatural which is attached (or semi-attached) to the mysterious Stella, including some unduly eerie music by Malcolm Arnold. Interestingly enough, the one point where this element is comparatively successful takes place on the bridge of the tug. David, looking through the window of the wheelhouse,



Trevor Howard in "The Key".

mistakes the ship's "Sparks" for the ghost of Chris. By a brilliant sideways tracking shot (another superb example of how to use CinemaScope), the image of Chris, seen through the window, changes to that of the "Sparks" seen through the adjacent door.

This review may be felt to be too critical; and it would be a sad thing if it deterred anyone from seeing *The Key*, which despite the ambivalence discussed above, is a work of real distinction, and needless to say, of high entertainment value.

As Chris, Trevor Howard gives a performance so true and so compelling as to leave one gasping. It says much for William Holden's own talents that he carries the whole of the latter part of the film without for one moment making us miss Howard.

Sophia Loren, in what, for reasons already stated, is no easy part, does very well within the limitations of pose and gesture. And the casting of the smaller parts, as ever with Reed, is impeccable; in particular, a fine and sensitive performance by Bryan Forbes, as the mate, a monstrously effective hotel porter by Noel Purcell, and one of those brief moments of sheer joy which Irene Handl from time to time brings to British films.

Finally, the tug herself, shot from every conceivable angle, takes on a real personality, so that her fighting end seems as tragic as that of the crew who man her. The photography of seascapes, battles and burning ships is exceptionally fine.

BASIL WRIGHT

NOTTI BIANCHE

WHEN great directors consciously set out to create masterpieces, it always seems to end badly. The result is lifeless and remote, and often a throw-back to some old abandoned manner. It happened recently to Autant-Lara, when he resurrected *Marguerite de la Nuit* from an *avant-garde* Faust novel by L'Herbier's erstwhile scenarist, Pierre MacOrlan—then laid out the mummified corpse in a fantastic "twenties" setting, presumably in memory of Autant-Lara's own youth spent as L'Herbier's *décorateur*. It has now happened to Luchino Visconti in *Notti Bianche* (Rank).

Dostoevsky's story of a daydreamer and the girl he meets by chance in St. Petersburg has been adapted by Suso Cecchi d'Amico and Visconti to the modern setting of a Mediterranean seaport, where motor-cyclists prowl the misty, neon-lit streets and blue-denimed dancers rock and roll at the Nuovo Bar. Mario, a shy

young clerk new in town, strolls through the night looking for a pick-up. He finds Natalia forlorn and sobbing on the canal bridge. After some persuasion, she is sufficiently reassured the next night to confide in him. The mysterious sailor she loves and waits for was a lodger in her grandmother's house until his urgent departure a year ago. The appointed time has come for his return, but he has not kept his promise. She believes he may be staying in a nearby hotel, and gives Mario a letter to deliver. Bewildered, irritated, he destroys it. The following night it is he that hides and she that pursues. He owns up; she forgives him. They dance, they rejoice in the falling snow, he is certain he has won her, when suddenly she runs frantically to the bridge. Her true love has come back. Weeping, Mario picks up his coat where she has dropped it and wanders off alone, a stray dog at his heels.

This *conte*, for it is little more, survives only as a basis for an uneasy attempt—in aesthetic rather than human terms—to fuse a new, enclosed, and formal *mise en scène* with an old, irrevocably lost nostalgia. Exquisite in gesture, marooned in time, *Notti Bianche* has had a great number of the most studied simplicities and elaborate fabrications of the pre-1925 *avant-garde* lavished upon it. In its plot, and in Visconti's evident infatuation with his leading actress, Maria Schell, it reminds one of Kirsanov and his simple tales of *L'Ironie du Destin*—in which a forsaken girl and a desperately lonely man meet on a park bench to find that happiness has passed them by—all made with the utmost loving care as poetic tributes to Sibirskaya's face. In its stylised, artificial settings, its consistently beautiful camera-work and effects of chiaroscuro; its arabesques of movement; its emotional bric-a-brac and abstract, idealised passions; above all in its disenchanting expression of the illusory nature of love—*Notti Bianche* is a ghost from the past that once belonged to L'Herbier and Louis Delluc.

Apart from two Magnani vehicles, Visconti's record offers a constant reminder that the first master of the Italian *avant-garde* is also the last to emerge from the French. Unlike previous directors who grew up in this tradition—Renoir (his early mentor), Carné, Autant-Lara, Grémillon, Epstein—Visconti's full stature was apparent from the start. After the themes of sexual fever, corruption, and fatality in *Ossessione* and *Senso*, this present exercise in "neo-romanticism" seems a natural enough development, if one bears in mind the hints of formalism and abstraction in Visconti's "neo-realism", as well as the pretty safe generalisation that the cinema's preoccupation with *le destin* and decay has never been more than one flight up from decadent cinema. *Notti Bianche* is decadent, and yet it could only have been made by a master. It moves slowly, but with complete exterior conviction. Visually it is an astonishing essay in black-and-white composition and architectural unity; and there is an adept use of flashbacks when the stranger whom Natalia waits for fades into the stranger in whom she confides. But within this assured, meticulous framework, the characters remain elusive symbols, part-real, part-dream, some eccentric, some capricious, their feelings intellectualised and their actions predestined.

The acting is everything one has a right to expect from a well-ordered séance. Marcello Mastroianni as Mario, almost the only tangible character in the film, poignantly communicates the urgency of the dream that has entangled him, and in the otherwise impressionistic dance hall sequence gives a lively and truthful glimpse of every intellectual letting his hair down. Clara Calamai's prostitute is a demanding, accusing visitation from the past and *Ossessione*. Strangest of all are Maria Schell's Natalia, maddeningly fey and closely related to Mae Marsh's "little pet sister", chewing up yards of hankie and hiding in a hen coop; and Jean Marais' taciturn, enigmatic Lodger with a taste for grand opera and crime novels. (Mrs. Belloc Lowndes . . . ?)

PETER JOHN DYER

THE THRONE OF BLOOD

AKIRA KUROSAWA, director of *The Throne of Blood* (Curzon) has set his Western audiences a stiff test of self-denial. In order to give themselves a chance to enjoy this film, they must try to forget all they know about Shakespeare's *Macbeth*—an effort of detachment which is made as difficult as it could be. For Kurosawa tells the story of two Samurai, Washizu and Miki, who command forts under the supreme authority of Tsuzuki, Lord of Cobweb Castle. After a battle in which they throw back the forces of a rival Lord, the samurai are riding through Cobweb Forest when they meet an old woman spinning in a lonely glade. She foretells

glory for Washizu—first the command of North Mansion, then control of Cobweb Castle itself. But it is Miki's son who will succeed Washizu at the castle . . . It is the familiar story, compressing into an hour and three-quarters the main incidents of Shakespeare's play, though most of the minor characters, from Macduff downwards, have vanished. Consequently, after our first curiosity to see how the Japanese will conceive witches, Dunsinane, Scottish barons, and Birnam Wood, *The Throne of Blood* is (to a Western audience, at least) totally stripped of suspense.

This would not matter if Kurosawa had enriched what is left with a personal vision or subtlety. But he seems to have decided to let the legend tell itself and engender its own excitement. And so, while we wait for Washizu to murder Tsuzuki, we who know the plot know he will do it, and, deprived of the tension which an audience new to the story might feel, we have nothing to do but mourn the lack of anything to take the place of Shakespeare's speeches. Kurosawa gives us no insight into his characters and there are many sequences where the drama evaporates in the interval of waiting for the next event. Only rarely, in a scene like the banquet to which Miki never comes, does the direction match the situation in style and mood.

The acting strikes the same note. Toshiro Mifune, as Washizu, looks tigerishly impressive, sounds fierce, and acts his heart out in the scenes of defiance at the end of the film. But he is not given the kind of script or acting opportunities which would allow him to register more than a few simple emotions—shock when his wife, Asaji, tells him to murder Tsuzuki, guilty terror when he performs the deed, agonised remorse during the banquet scene. Of the motives for his actions and his relationships with other people we learn almost nothing. We are never drawn into his dilemma or made to feel with this abstracted figure in an artificial situation. Asaji is played with deadly immobility by Isuzu Yamada, especially frightening and pathetic in the sleep-walking scene, and conveying perfectly all that her part demands; but none of the other characters is more than lightly drawn. The story does not seem to have inspired Kurosawa to tell us anything of his own about these people; it is left as a story, and, in this bald and stark telling, an episodic and untidy one.

After *Rashomon* and *Seven Samurai*, this film is even more of a disappointment because of the traces it bears of a cinematic Grand Master at work. The locations are a triumph of atmosphere, set in high cold hills with clouds sweeping over the ground and parting fitfully to show a castle clinging to the steep moors; movement is photographed with a vigour and a sensuous assurance that is unique; the final sequence, in which Washizu is turned into a living pincushion by the arrows of his own men, until a final shot transfixes his throat, is brilliantly horrifying. But in the end none of these effects, overpowering and beautiful as they may be, seems to have much to do with the story. The film, by the way, is told in flashback, and it is perhaps the opening and closing shots (of a memorial, on a deserted bleak hillside, to the now vanished Cobweb Castle) that say most.

KENNETH CAVANDER

SOUTH PACIFIC and MERRY ANDREW

ALTHOUGH the action of *South Pacific* (Fox) takes place during the Second World War, the basic personal conflicts of the story are very topical: the heroine, a U.S. Navy nurse, is in love with a middle-aged French planter living on the island where she is stationed. Her hopes of marriage are shattered when she learns of his previous marriage to a Polynesian woman, who died leaving him with two children: the effects of this disclosure on Nellie Forbush are traumatic, for she is from Little Rock, Arkansas. Mitzi Gaynor, who improves all the time, makes this predicament real and touching; her conversion to a more liberal viewpoint at the end is rather less convincing, because not clearly motivated in the script. Rossano Brazzi is conventionally romantic, little more, and neither he nor Miss Gaynor quite succeeds in making us believe that a mature and cultivated Frenchman would fall in love with a narrow-minded and not very bright girl from the American South. The sub-plot—a young officer in love with a Tonkinese girl—is from this point of view more believable, and provides the most successful lyric passages (barring the Hollywood vulgarity of an underwater kiss). As the lieutenant, John Kerr is sympathetic; and France Nuyen makes an exquisite Liat.



"Notti Bianche": Clara Calamai and Marcello Mastroianni.

South Pacific follows what has by now become the pattern for the screen versions of Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals: the original is treated as though it were in some way sacred and transferred to the screen in what sometimes seems to be *more* than its entirety—in its enormity, you might say. If any dialogue *is* left out, it is usually because what was, on the stage, reported action actually happens on the screen. In writing and directing the stage version, Joshua Logan evidently relied on a series of short, impressionistic scenes to convey the idea of large-scale physical action. Now that everything can be shown realistically—"with the co-operation of the U.S. Navy", etc.—the problem arises of making acceptable the conventions of the musical. Possibly the best way to make them acceptable is not to draw attention to them; but here there is too conscious an attempt to create some kind of heightened atmosphere, especially in Leon Shamroy's determinedly eccentric lighting, which suffuses the screen with purple and yellow filters at the drop of a music cue and occasionally makes the actors look as if they were cast in bronze. At other times the musical numbers remain obstinately stagey: these sailors on the palm-fringed shore singing "Bloody Mary" behave for all the world as if they were on the stage of the Majestic Theatre on 44th Street. The one big dance sequence, the ceremonial on the island of Bali Ha'i, is Hollywood-primitive of the most obvious kind.

Although not the first film to be shot in Todd-AO, *South Pacific* is the first to be shown in England in this process. Essentially, the Todd-AO screen is just another wider screen; it is taller, which is an advantage, and there seems not to be the difficulty in maintaining overall clear focus that occurs in CinemaScope. On the other hand distortions of another kind result from the screen's concave shape—curved horizons, and so on.

Merry Andrew (M-G-M) is the first film to be directed by Michael Kidd, and the latest vehicle for Danny Kaye. Unfortunately it is just that—another vehicle. Based on a story by Paul Gallico, the

plot concerns an English schoolmaster given to teaching classes by means of patter-songs; this makes him popular with the boys but not with his father, the headmaster. To prove his scholastic capabilities he goes off on an archaeological expedition and becomes involved with a circus and its proprietor's family. Noel Purcell and Salvatore Baccaloni make a formidable pair of father-figures, but the characterisation does not go much beyond the limits of caricature: the comedy is all fairly predictable and carries an air of rather hasty improvisation—due, no doubt, to Kidd's lack of experience as a director. He is more at home, of course, in the musical numbers, which are fluently handled. One hopes that in his next film he is given an assignment more worthwhile than the mere furnishing of opportunities for Danny Kaye to display his versatility; and one wishes the same for Danny Kaye.

DAVID VAUGHAN

TOUCH OF EVIL

TOUCH OF EVIL (Rank) might suggest that an instinct for grandiose melodrama is proving the most durable element in Orson Welles' still formidable talent. After the perversely extravagant crooks' tour of *Confidential Report*, this film represents a kind of marking time, evidence that Welles remains fascinated by power and its corruption, by the fatal flaw in the strong man (the line that can be traced from *Kane*, through the two Shakespeare adaptations, to *Confidential Report* and the present film); and evidence that he can still deal the technical cards out of the pack with a card-sharper's eye to subterfuge. *Touch of Evil* tells the story of a corrupt police captain—"a great detective but a lousy cop"—and of the honest Mexican narcotics investigator who brings about

his downfall. In essence, this is not very complicated; as told by Welles, it becomes a jungle of confused motivations, nightmarish betrayals and discoveries. All the stylistic equipment—heavy shadows, suggestions of menace lurking just beyond camera range, tilted angles and half-heard dialogue—is called into play to convey the landscape of corruption. The opening, with a bomb planted in a car and the camera tracking its slow progress through a border town, immediately grips. The last scenes, shot among murky canals and crumbling oil derricks, with the hero scrambling after his victim to take down a confession on a tape-recorder, is a fine bravura exercise. But much of the rest is Welles at his most perversely obscure. It seems entirely typical that the investigator cannot even make an innocent telephone call without encountering a strange, blind woman, that the desert motel which is the scene of the bizarre but somewhat half-hearted drug orgy should be staffed by a near-maniac.

As in *Confidential Report*, Welles has assembled an exotic cast. Janet Leigh and Charlton Heston both play up courageously in this company; Akim Tamiroff is a sinister grotesque; Zsa Zsa Gabor, Joseph Cotten and Mercedes McCambridge are briefly sighted. In a gypsy fortune teller rig-out of black wig, cheroot and tattered finery, Marlene Dietrich is laconically and nostalgically

mysterious. Welles himself plays Quinlan, the detective who frames his victims but (apparently) frames only the guilty. Limping and lumbering, gross and powerful, Quinlan is an expression of his creator's continuing interest in characters so over-size that they must be accepted rather than explained. Melodrama can survive without explanations; and in watching this shadowy, twisted thriller one may reflect not that the talent responsible for *Citizen Kane* is being wasted, but that Welles, after all, never managed really to explain Kane.

To set against this, though, there is Welles' recent letter to the *New Statesman*, in which he wrote of the "wholesale re-editing of the film by the executive producer" and the "several scenes which I did not write and was not invited to direct". Here, presumably, is some explanation of the film's air of scrambling incoherence; and it seems sad and characteristic that Welles' return to directing in an American studio, after almost ten years, should be made in these circumstances. But the fact remains: whatever the vicissitudes through which the film has passed since leaving his hands, it still carries one of the cinema's unmistakable signatures. No-one else, surely, could have made this thriller—though there may be moments when one feels that no-one else would have wanted to. PENELOPE HOUSTON

In Brief

A DANGEROUS AGE (*Films de France*), which cost rather less than most British second features, is the first film from a 24-year-old director, Sidney Furie, and the first feature to be made in Canada without American production influence. Furie raised the loans to finance the film himself and successfully countered the practical problems involved in shooting a feature under conditions geared to the production of shorts. (The laboratory, for instance, had never processed 35mm. before.) His intensity of purpose is reflected by the film's single-minded approach to its subject. Two young college students plan to cross the American border, marry and return home to present parents and authorities with a *fait accompli*. This thwarted attempt is virtually the whole story. And Furie's concentration on the boy and girl's emotions, his sympathy and remarkable understanding of the viewpoints of all involved, provide a moving and—except for the sexual aspect of the relationship—a convincing picture.

The film's use of intimate duologues suggests the influence of the best adaptations from American television. Though *A Dangerous Age* is by no means as complete a success as *The Young Stranger*, the style and approach are similar, particularly in a well-sustained sequence in a police station and a closely observed restaurant squabble. Occasionally the construction is a little pat. The restaurant scene, for instance, is later used rather glibly to underline

an argument between the boy and girl. Moreover, in a film that managed completely to engross one in its situation, the technical roughness and the inexperience of the director would hardly jar so noticeably as they do here.

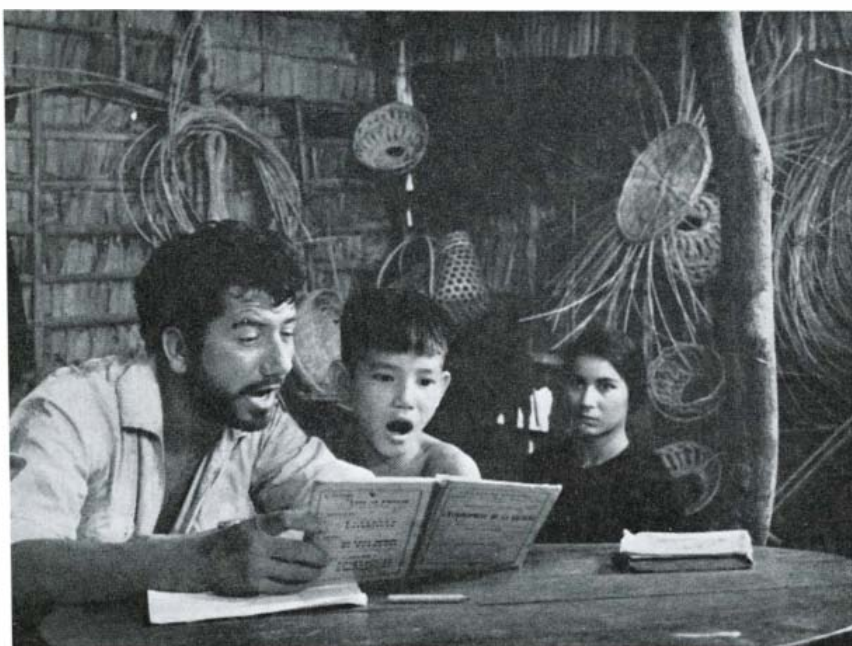
But the sense of hostile incomprehension between the boy and the adult world is accurately caught, and here Furie is greatly helped by Ben Piazza. From time to time a Method mannerism mars his performance (he studied at the Actors' Studio), but generally this portrait of a puzzled, urgent adolescent is absorbingly authentic. Anne Pearson, equally inexperienced, is less successful and her performance as the girl has an over-bright, almost aggressive quality.

A Dangerous Age is a welcome film. Quite apart from the promise of the talents it introduces, its London success has apparently already encouraged a serious consideration of the possibilities of feature production in Canada.—DEREK HILL

FUGITIVE IN SAIGON (*Rank*), or to use its original title *Mort en Fraude*, is the first film by Marcel Camus, who previously worked as assistant director to Becker, Rouquier, Astruc, Bunuel and others. Set in Indo-China during the Viet-minh war, its story combines exotic locations (beautifully shot by Edmond Séchan) with social and political comments set within the framework of a thriller. The hazards of such an enterprise have proved too much for many more experienced directors; and Camus's personality, at least in this initial effort, is not strong enough to fuse the film's disparate elements into a satisfactory whole. The central idea is quite promising: a young Frenchman involved in currency smuggling is given refuge in a poverty-stricken and war-torn village by an enigmatic Eurasian girl with whom he falls in love. As time goes on, the people's plight engages his sympathies to such an extent that he devotes himself to their cause and finally gives his life for them.

In filling in his backgrounds, Camus manages to avoid the worst brand of vulgar exoticism—the crowded, sweating towns, the swamp lands, the disease-ridden peasants, are presented realistically and without romantic adornment. Anti-French colonial references are brief and to the point, without perhaps extending beyond a rather conscious liberalism. This mood of intellectual observation gives a clue, in fact, to the relative failure of the film as a whole. Camus never involves us fully with his characters' inner emotions: the script is made up of innumerable short scenes, the relationships stated rather than developed. At the end, when the Frenchman dies in the river, his hand floating on the flower-strewn water, the symbolism seems hollow because its realisation is too detached and contrived. Also, Daniel Gélin's

"Fugitive in Saigon": Daniel Gélin and Anh Machard.





Left: Katharine Hepburn and Adolphe Menjou in "Morning Glory"; right: Susan Strasberg and Henry Fonda in "Stage Struck."

glum playing, despite one or two flashes of self-revelation, is unable to tell us more about the character than the script allows; in contrast, the local players have vivacity and a grave charm. Camus's current project is a Negro version of the Orpheus legend—perhaps this unusual experiment will reveal his personality more clearly to us.—JOHN GILLETT.

STAGE STRUCK (R.K.O.). Filmed entirely in New York, *Stage Struck* is a coloured and fanciful remake of *Morning Glory*. Produced by Stuart Millar (*The Young Stranger*), and directed by Sidney Lumet (*12 Angry Men*) from a screenplay by Ruth and Augustus Goetz, the film introduces itself with workmanlike credentials; and, minor reservations apart—mostly concerning Susan Strasberg's performance—it succeeds admirably as a pleasant, if roseate, entertainment. In 1933 C. A. Lejeune wrote of the original: "This picture depends for its effects entirely on Katharine Hepburn's playing as the small town Little Theatre actress who makes good on Broadway. The story is artificial, the direction almost incredibly bad, and the rest of the cast preposterous." Interestingly enough, the present version neatly reverses this judgment.

The story is still admittedly artificial, though not in a crippling sense. For all the sophisticated sheen of the Goetz's literate script, the story itself is really a fable—a modern fairy tale of talent rewarded, set against the lights of Broadway. The direction on this occasion, far from being "incredibly bad", might be described as credibly good. In his first film Lumet demonstrated his ability for working with actors; with *Stage Struck* he sharpens his talent further. Less heavily reliant on dialogue to make essential plot points, he here stands back from the script and uses his camera for effect and display. Two set-pieces stand out: a wildly uninhibited theatrical party, where conversations intriguingly overlap and temperaments abound; and, best of all, a scene of quiet excitement as the camera simply records the mechanics involved in the raising of the first night curtain. Finally, *Stage Struck* has some excellent performances. With ease and perfect control, Henry Fonda invests his role with authority and sympathy. Partnering him is Joan Greenwood, deliciously exaggerated in a performance of feline malice; and a likeable newcomer, Christopher Plummer, makes an interesting debut as the love-lorn young playwright. As for Susan Strasberg? "I have something very wonderful in me," she blithely exclaims at one point. Grudgingly, one allows that she may indeed have something wonderful *within* her—what appears on the surface, though, is another matter. She plays a difficult part awkwardly and over-gushingly, giving at times the impression of somewhat

uncertainly attempting to imitate Hepburn's playing in the earlier version. Although this performance in the film's key part rather rocks its balance, *Stage Struck* has assets enough to survive.

JOHN CUTTS

HOT SPELL (Paramount). In spite of unassimilated theatrical episodes and a tendency to exploit Shirley Booth as a sentimental counterpoise to some very plain speaking, *Hot Spell* nags away persistently on the theme of stresses within the American family. Mom's place has long been recognised as suspect, leading her as it often does to a parody of male assertiveness or an oppressive inflation of domesticity. The attitude behind this film—a root and branch rejection of Mom, both as wife and mother—is more significant than the surface treatment admits.

Alma Duval is the kind of emotional parasite who cannot bear to see her children grow up, because that would remove her sources of energy. When the younger son wants to work overtime she urges him to stay and watch television at home with her; when her husband quarrels with the elder she interprets a healthy clash of wills as disaster; her conclusion after any conflict is that nobody meant what they said. Fixated in time and place on the early years of her marriage, she embodies stagnation, cosy, self-deluding, and dangerous.

The zest with which resistance to this clinging ostrichism comes across reminds one that Daniel Mann, the director, made *The Rose Tattoo* as well as *Come Back, Little Sheba*, and follows a pattern recurrent not only in Tennessee Williams but in such films as *Bachelor Party*. It supplies the best sequence in *Hot Spell*—where Anthony Quinn as the husband introduces his younger son to the pool room, a refuge where friendship and business prosper as never in the home, and outlines his domestic frustrations under the pretext of giving advice. This has a male complicity which shows everyone concerned at the top of his form, and is balanced, again as in *Bachelor Party*, by a dialogue between anxious wife and a *confidante* injured to infidelity—hilariously acted by Eileen Heckart.

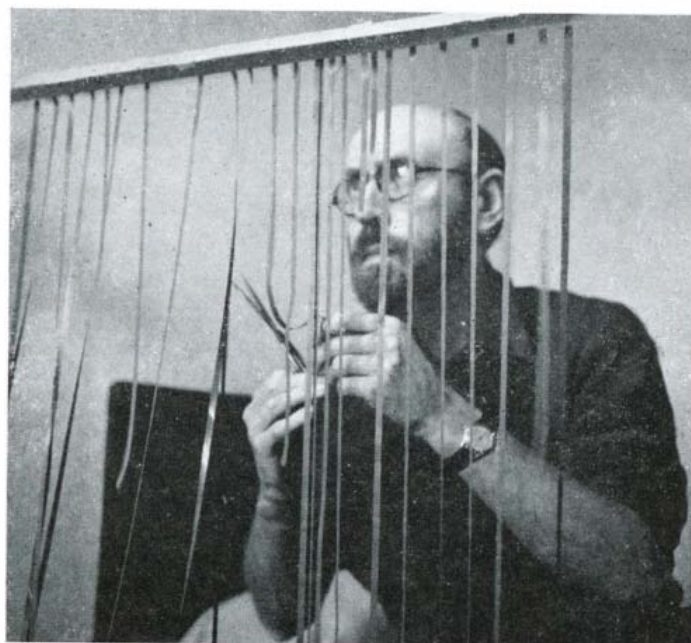
But for a mature approach to this problem misogyny is not enough. James Poe's script, based on a stage original by Lonnie Coleman, borrows, as so often in such investigations, from Arthur Miller, for instance in the *Death of a Salesman*-like funeral. But it leaves the hub of the action, Alma herself, altogether too vague. We need to know more about her neurosis, and more about her husband. Mann settles for a dignified and endearing performance from Shirley Booth, punctuated by that infallible sign of creative surrender—the lingering, solitary close-up with reassuring music.

LAURENCE KITCHIN



by DEREK HILL

Amateur



Status



ANY account of activity and progress by amateur film-makers in this country might reasonably be expected to begin with a series of clear-cut groupings. But the word 'amateur' itself is still being disputed; and the "British amateur film movement", a favourite phrase of the cine magazines, brackets the man who makes splicers out of mousetraps with the *avant-garde* enthusiast.

The numerous national and international competitions are largely responsible for the extraordinary controversy over what constitutes a genuine amateur film. The majority of amateurs nervously safeguard their status in order that their work may be eligible for as many contests as possible. As there are considerable variations in the rules of these competitions, the results are often remarkable. Some bodies insist that to qualify as an amateur the film-maker cannot have any connections with the film industry professionally. His work must never be sponsored, nor, according to some rulings, should he receive any financial assistance towards its production. At least one organisation insists that he must shoot his own titles and undertake his own sound recording. Another stipulates that if the finished film is sold, hired out, or even shown on television, it no longer ranks as an amateur production.

One might have thought that an amateur film meant simply one produced without any intention of making a profit—anything, in fact, from a family record to some of the Free Cinema productions. But the first group are often contemptuously referred to by those amateurs with fiction film or documentary experience as the "baby-on-the-lawn" school, while Free Cinema, despite the obvious lessons and stimulus it offers, has been disregarded or dismissed as semi-professional by most amateur authorities. Significantly, the Free Cinema film-makers have shown themselves anxious to avoid the amateur label; a label which, to everyone except the amateurs themselves, has become a term almost of scorn.

Amateurs who cherish the word are inclined to be concerned with the "how" of film-making to the virtual exclusion of the "what" and the "why". Clubs feel the shortage of ideas and scripts to such an extent that, when a suggestion is submitted, it is not at all unusual for a committee to organise three or four units to make their own versions of the same script "just for the experience". The cine magazines, whose thorough coverage of gadget-making and camera technique quite swamps the occasional contributions on subject matter, accurately enough reflect the real enthusiasms of their readers. When Denis Forman said that fifty years ago the majority of amateur film-makers would have been fretwork enthusiasts, no-one complained.

The obsessions with photographic problems, the constant searching for pretexts to keep cine club cameras and members fully occupied, might be expected to produce at least a high technical level in amateur work. In fact, the progress in photographic standards has generally been rather slower than the rise in quality afforded by improvements in film stock and equipment. Even though the prize-winning films in more than one national competition are clearly judged

Amateur film-makers. Above: John Daborn at work on "Floral Fantasy"; centre: Stuart Wynn Jones; below: Kevin Brownlow (centre) working on his film "The Capture".

principally on the success of the photography, consistently good camerawork remains rare.

Nevertheless exposure and focus still seem the amateur's principal yardsticks of quality, and such cine organisations as the Institute of Amateur Cinematographers and the Federation of Cine Societies have scarcely shown themselves eager to direct attention towards more essential qualities. Indeed, the attitude is never more prevalent than during the annual session of the British Amateur Cinematographers Central Council, at which representatives of the various bodies interested in amateur work meet to select the most suitable films to represent Britain at U.N.I.C.A., the leading international amateur contest.

Few acknowledged amateurs have tried to avail themselves of the opportunities offered by the British Film Institute's Experimental Film Fund. Most approaches to the Committee were made by artists anxious to work in film for the first time; and the general amateur reaction was one almost of petulance, not only over the question of whether such financial assistance should rule out contenders for amateur contests, but that the B.F.I. should support inexperienced writers and directors who often had to be given technical help.

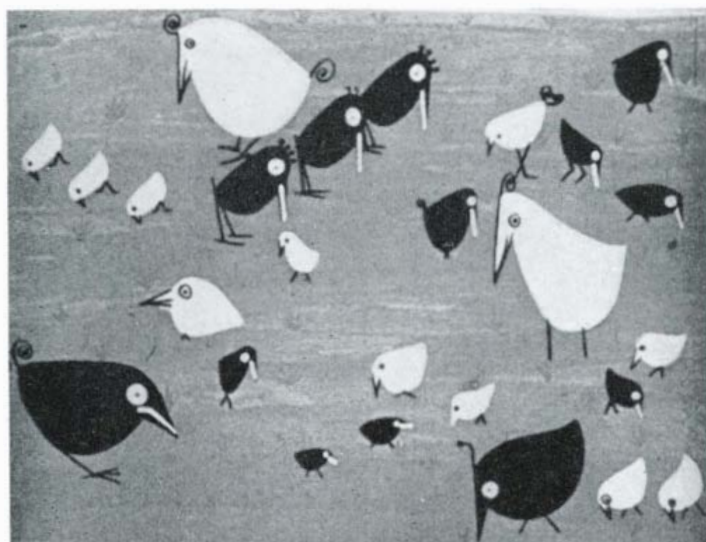
A certain amount of balance is restored to the situation by the yearly presentation by *Amateur Cine World* of the "Ten Best Amateur Films of the Year" at the National Film Theatre, and later throughout British and Commonwealth cine clubs. Gordon Malthouse, editor of the magazine and principal judge, is quite capable of giving an award to an artistically enterprising production which horrifies the fellow amateurs who fill the cinema by being of a low technical standard. When the inevitable uproar is over, it often turns out that a promising talent has been encouraged and a stubborn audience forced at least to think.

"I like to see people expressing themselves," Malthouse says, "and I would like to see the cine camera become a tool as generally used as the typewriter." This, he claims, is the policy behind *Amateur Cine World*, his long-established monthly. But the preponderance of technical data and do-it-yourself material tend to give the effect a magazine for writers might produce by concentrating on spelling and typing practice.

Amateur Movie Maker, also published by Fountain Press, is a newcomer among cine publications edited by Tony Rose, author of several books on film-making and writer-director of such stylish productions as *Paper Boat*, very nearly an amateur *Brief Encounter*, and *Coming Shortly*, an agreeable satire on film trailers. Brighter, glossier, even a little flashier than *Amateur Cine World*, it is described by Rose as "trying to cater for the individual film-maker rather than the club." The magazine is concerned, he adds, with the technique of making films rather than making equipment.

One would like to see both these magazines giving a more clear-cut lead to amateurs in suggesting directions open to the film-maker. Imagine the effect special screening of, say, a selection of Free Cinema films could have on audiences attracted from the large readership of these magazines—audiences who at present only get belated reports after the programmes have ended their National Film Theatre run. If amateurs generally have only a superficial knowledge of the kind of work which can be produced outside the commercial cinema framework, the magazines must be held almost as responsible as some of the national cine organisations.

Amateur Movie Maker has just recently shown its awareness of this responsibility with a long and happy welcome to *Amelia and the Angel*, a half hour 16mm. production by Ken Russell. This is just the kind of event one always hopes for in the amateur field—the emergence of an exhilarating unknown talent. *Amelia and the Angel* is Russell's first completed film; and it has all the freshness and vitality which freedom from box-office and deadline worries should bring. Inspired, Russell admits, by *The Red Balloon*, it



"Watch the Birdie".

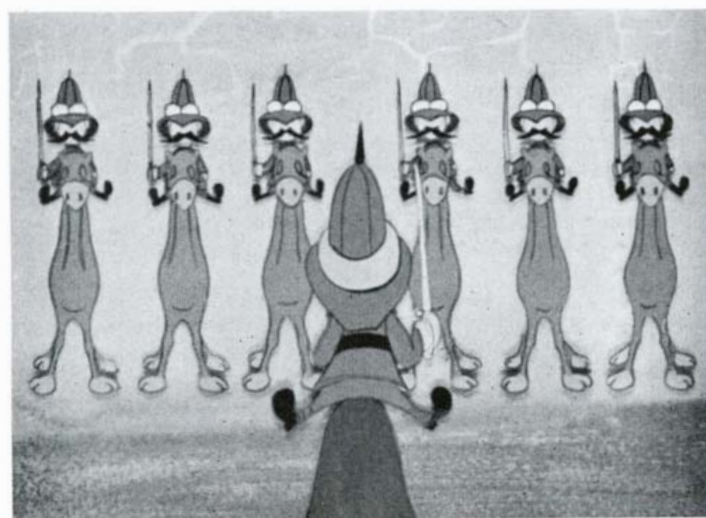
avoids the forced charm and cleverness of Lamorisse's film. Its story of a little girl's search for a pair of angel wings is presented through the eyes of a child, and the unaccountable adult world she sees is captured with the wit of the best of James Broughton's work.

Russell's impact on the amateur scene has been striking. His film is almost certainly the most successful amateur production made in this country—accepting the narrow limitations of the word already indicated. He is currently working on a sponsored short about Lourdes, which presumably means that most amateurs will now promptly label him professional and take no further interest in anything he produces.

2

The narrowly egocentric outlook and frightening complacency of the majority of amateur film-makers has led to an almost complete absence of schools or movements. The only real exception is the Grasshopper Group, an amateur organisation devoted to the production of experimental and cartoon films. This rather awkward bracketing springs from the interests of the founder and chairman, John Daborn, winner of innumerable British and European awards. His cartoons take several years to make, and his "pixilated" productions are almost as laborious. Unfortunately, the painstaking polish of his films often covers little more than

"The Battle of Wangapore".





Amateur personality: Dr. Richard Jobson in "Driftwood and Seashell".

plodding imitations of techniques already sufficiently explored. *The Millstream* and *Floral Fantasy* are poor man's Disney; *Two's Company* and *Bride and Groom* exploit the "pixilation" technique of Norman McLaren's *Neighbours*; *The History of Walton* follows the style of the David Hand *Musical Paintbox* series; and *The Battle of Wangapore* uses characters virtually identical to those in Roy Davis's *Punch* cartoons. Daborn, who is quoted by most amateurs with something approaching awe, concentrates on technique to such an extent that the subject matter of his films has become comparatively unimportant. Significantly, he is now completing *Let Battle Commence*, a documentary which tells how he made *Battle of Wangapore*.

The principal significance of the Grasshopper Group so far has been less in the films they have made (*Two's Company*, *Battle of Wangapore*, *Bride and Groom* and *Let Battle Commence* are all Group productions) than in the talent they have discovered and encouraged. *Watch the Birdie*, a genuinely original and sparkling cartoon by Bob Godfrey, Keith Learner and Vera Linnecar, first attracted attention through repeated Group showings. Stuart Wynn Jones, whose work had previously been shown only to a few friends, was so encouraged by the reception that the Group gave to his experimental cartoons *Oodles of Doodles* and *Linden Lea* that he went on to make *Short Spell*, *Pythagoras* and *Raving Waving*.

Wynn Jones's work in these films shows its derivations almost as strongly as Daborn's; but he has taken McLaren's experiments in visual and aural relationships to new lengths. His hand-drawn sound tracks and animation techniques have become extraordinarily complex. In his earlier films he controlled his discoveries to produce results of apparent simplicity, particularly in the delightful *Short Spell*; but *Raving Waving*, his latest production and one of the current Ten Best, suggests that concern with the technical problems he is now investigating has weakened his previous regard for form.

Other Grasshopper Group productions nearing completion include *Quiet Waters*, Jon Hall's 35mm. adaptation of Maupassant's *Letter from a Man Found Drowned*, and *The Window*, an experimental cartoon by Richard Horn. The Group's method of financing their films is a bold one. Shares are sold in productions whose scripts have been approved by the Committee, without any guarantee that members will get their money back. In no circumstances, it is emphasised,

Amateur ambition: staging of a Nazi rally in Trafalgar Square for Kevin Brownlow's "It Happened Here".

can they make a profit. The author is then given as much financial and technical assistance as the Group can offer, and interested members help him to set up a production unit. In the case of cartoons, a good deal of work is done through the post, since the Group has members throughout Britain and even a few overseas.

The only other cine club to have a group reputation is Ace Movies, known for their tendency towards the bizarre. Their latest film, *Sakura*, is an adaptation of the willow pattern plate story, transferred to Japan and shot with such attention to detail that it took seven years to complete.

Time is about the only thing of which the amateur has an unlimited supply—though the point of spending so long on such an unpromising subject still remained mysterious when *Sakura* was eventually seen. Kevin Brownlow, one of the few amateurs with real claims to a serious purpose in his work, spent three years on his first film, *The Capture*, an adaptation of Maupassant's *Les Prisonniers* set in the last war. Since the film was on 9.5mm. and of poor technical quality, it received few showings; but it did indicate that Brownlow, at seventeen, already had an unusual gift for handling players and remarkable visual control. For the past three years he has been working on *It Happened Here*, an ambitious feature-length 16mm. production set in a Britain occupied by Nazi troops. The film endeavours to show the psychological reality of occupation through an intense, intimate study of its effect on one woman. In an attempt to create a convincing background for his story, Brownlow has successfully staged crowd and battle scenes on a scale which might challenge professional resources. He anticipates another three or four years' work on this film before its completion.

One of the most engaging amateur talents to appear in the last couple of years is Dr. Richard Jobson, whose *Driftwood and Seashell* was the happiest of last year's Ten Best. This completely individual film shows its director composing a painting based on flotsam picked up by his wife, and reflecting on the thread of line and movement that unites the various objects. The sincerity of its wheezy, ambling commentary and the doctor's refreshing earnestness make the film a perfect minor example of uninhibited self-expression.

Surprisingly little concern is shown by most amateurs with aspects of everyday life. Documentaries almost always have to do with unusual hobbies or places of historical interest.





"Freshness and vitality . . ." Ken Russell's "Amelia and the Angel".

The only exceptions widely seen in the past few years have been *Rode Safely* and *Watch Out for Children*, Edwin Lambert's forceful road safety films with their direct and vigorous demonstrations of urgent lessons, and Viking Film Unit's *England May Be Home*, an account of the problems confronting Italian workers and their families attempting to settle in Bedford. This production remains a little too distant from its subject, but the sympathetic concern is as obvious as it is unusual. *England May Be Home* and *Solitaire*, Quorum Films' admirably intentioned but clumsily executed study of a prisoner in solitary confinement, are the only productions in the latest Ten Best selection which indicate any feeling for the problems of real people and real life; and one cannot help thinking that this is symptomatic of amateur production at present as a whole.

Even the personal family films, which offer endless scope for intimate and warm-hearted character studies in a way impossible in the commercial cinema, have so far provided little more than indistinguishable animated snapshots, pictures of interest mainly to their makers. The best known among producers of this type of film, Peter Bowen, is

celebrated not so much for the portrait his work presents of his family as for the ingeniousness of the adventures and situations they are called upon to act out.

Affection, in fact, has become an almost absent quality in amateur work since Bill Dobson's *His Crumbling World* and *Fishers All*, both made while he was in his teens, and to a lesser extent Bill Dobson Senior's *Trio in Trouble*. These films shared a pride in their Scottish locations and a real fondness for their characters. But it is several years since any work has been seen from either father or son.

Today concentration appears to be on comedies that build up to a single pay-off—represented in the current Ten Best by Bristol Cine Society's *To Have and To Hold* and Sutton Coldfield Cine Society's *Saturday Lunch*—and carefully dogged imitations of professional work. (3-D and wide screen systems for the amateur, it is worth noting, were hastily introduced within weeks of the first success of the professional novelties.) Perhaps few amateurs do have anything worth saying? The saddest aspect of the situation at present is that so few seem even to be aware of the opportunities their freedom offers them.



Cut



and come again !

by JOHN GILLETT

IT HAS often been said that the cinema is the most expendable of the arts. A recent visit to a North London cinema showing a reissue double bill provided its own comment on this, in evidence of the havoc that can be wrought by a determined editor and a pair of scissors. Outside the cinema, the posters advertised *Battle Stripe* and *Armoured Attack*; underneath were labels bearing the words "formerly *The Men*" and "formerly *North Star*". At first there seemed very little to worry about. Apart from slightly different credit titles, the copy of *The Men* was in good condition and in its original version. *North Star*, however, had undergone a remarkable and unhappy metamorphosis. Suspicions aroused by some additional photography and music credits at the beginning were confirmed by the appearance of a glib commentator over the opening scenes: "Somewhere in Eastern Europe, a people betrayed by their leaders were preparing to fight....."

Produced by Sam Goldwyn, directed by Lewis Milestone and scripted by Lillian Hellman in 1943, when the American-Soviet alliance was at its height, *North Star* described how various Russian peasant families combined to fight the German invaders. Although it was not always easy to accept

the appearance of familiar Hollywood faces masquerading under Russian beards, or the "happy, laughing" peasant songs which intermittently broke into the narrative, Milestone's picture of the coming of war was forceful and unromanticised and the detailed battle scenes were recognisably personal in style. Now, as *Armoured Attack*, the film makes recognition of the defending army as difficult as possible; also the word "Russian" is excised at least once from the sound track. Cut from 106 to 75 minutes, Milestone's film survives as little more than a confused action picture, with the inevitable commentator bridging the gaps. The biggest shock, though, was reserved for the end. A new epilogue has been added, in which, over stock shots of marching Red Army troops, the commentator warns that the Nazi menace has now been replaced by the Communist threat and that we must always be on our guard. So, in the words of a Hollywood trade paper, the original has been successfully "deloused".

Apart from the astonishing ethics which permitted these changes, the film provides an uneasy example of how the cinema can be used to reinterpret an artist's meaning in the light of contemporary attitudes. It seems unlikely that Milestone was notified that his 15-year-old picture had been co-opted into the cinema's Cold War; and even less likely that he would have been able to do anything about it. An approach to *Armoured Attack's* British distributors, Eros Films (one of the leading reissue companies), confirmed impressions that none of the alterations had been made in this country.

* * *

It must be conceded that, under present arrangements, production companies and distributors have the right to cut or alter their own property, to suit the exigencies of programming or for any other reason. And, of course, many minor films have not noticeably suffered from such excisions. On the other hand, the omission of even one scene from a more significant production can often weaken the entire conception of its writer and director. Recently, an increasing number of American pictures have been shortened, as well as Continental productions. The following examples, taken from works of varying artistic distinction, show the kind of thing that may happen:—

BITTER VICTORY. All the final scenes are missing from the British version, including one in which Curd Jurgens, as the tired and morally defeated officer, pins his newly acquired medal to the chest of a practice dummy. The final irony is thereby removed and the film now ends, abruptly, on a more conventional note. An American correspondent informs me that the director, Nicholas Ray, was apparently unaware of these changes.

L'ORO DI NAPOLI. Trade shown by Paramount in 1956, under the title *Every Day's a Holiday*, this film has not yet been seen in central London. Cut by over an hour and dubbed in pseudo-Cockney, its six stories were reduced to three and even these did not survive intact. All in all, the version amounted to a travesty of de Sica's film.

LOLA MONTES. Cut, dubbed and re-edited on the Continent, so that its flashbacks were removed and its central narrative point (the circus) relegated to the end, Ophüls' original conception was completely altered. The avowed motive for these changes was "to make the film more easily understandable" (and therefore popular). In this country, however, the film ran for only a few weeks in the West End and has now been withdrawn from distribution.

CHAPLIN. Of three Chaplin revivals recently seen in London, two were noticeably incomplete. *The Pilgrim* contained neither the famous sermon nor the final scene. *Shoulder Arms* was also cut, and, worse still, some extraneous material (from another Chaplin film, *A Day's Pleasure*) was inserted in the middle. Both films suffered from being shown at sound speed.

* * *

Apart from these specific and striking examples, the accompanying table gives details of some other titles which

Above: scene excised. The pornographic film session from "Bachelor Party".

SOME CASES OF CUTTING

Title	approx. minutes cut*	Details (when known)
REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE (X)	5	Cuts include part of an early scene with Dean and the probation officer and the knife fight.
LE ROUGE ET LE NOIR (X)	30	Cuts were made to shorten a lengthy film for distribution here.
LES HEROS SONT FATIGUES (X)	25	A quantity of tropical sex and violence and sub-plots involving subsidiary characters were removed.
GERVAISE (X)	3	The climax of the fight in the laundry; also brief cuts in dialogue scenes.
RAZZIA SUR LA CHNOUFF (X)	15	The drug-taking aspects of the plot were watered down, involving the removal of violence and some sensual dancing under the influence of drugs.
CROWDED PARADISE	20	Cuts include some early establishing scenes showing the young hero's background in Puerto Rico.
LES TRUANDS (X)	30	Details of cuts unknown.
L'AUBERGE ROUGE (X)	2	The confessional through the toasting fork and other scenes which might be thought to have an anti-clerical bias were trimmed.
SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS	3	Several seconds of climactic violence important to the plot; also brief dialogue cuts.
SENSO	20	The film was originally cut for Italian political reasons; the dubbed English version was subsequently shortened with some dialogue cuts.
A FACE IN THE CROWD	4	A scene in which Lonesome Rhodes' newly acquired bride does a dance on television to the accompaniment of Beethoven's 5th Symphony was omitted.
OEIL POUR OEIL	12	Several scenes building up the relationship between the two men alone in the desert were cut.
THE DIARY OF MAJOR THOMPSON	30	A number of episodes in an essentially episodic story were missing, causing extremely rough continuity.
A FAREWELL TO ARMS	10	Some of the more bloody war scenes and part of the hospital sequence were trimmed.
RAICES (ROOTS) (X)	15	The first of this quartet of stories of Mexican peasant life was omitted.

RE-ISSUES

Title	Original British Running Time (minutes)	Re-issue Running Time (minutes)
MEET JOHN DOE	123	98
ACE IN THE HOLE	111	98
THEY WERE EXPENDABLE	135	110
LETTER FROM AN UNKNOWN WOMAN	86	75
FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS	170	125

* Cuts made by distributor or censor (or a combination of both).

have undergone interference from distributor, censor, or on occasion a combination of both. As some films are cut before or after they reach the censor in order to receive an 'A' instead of an 'X' certificate, and as the censor's policy is to maintain secrecy about details of cuts, it is sometimes impossible to discover precisely who has been responsible for specific excisions. Despite the misuse in some quarters of the 'X' certificate, it has allowed us to see many films which might have been turned down under the previous dispensation. Yet the general public probably remains unaware of the high proportion of cut 'X' films shown since the certificate was introduced. Some of these cuts are of brief episodes of sex or violence which overstep the

B.B.F.C.'s standards of what is permissible for a British audience; others (as with the cuts by distributors) amount to complete sequences, designed to play an integral part in the narrative.

Paddy Chayefsky's *Bachelor Party*, for instance, discussed marital relationships in a way that was adult and occasionally ribald. Despite its 'X' certificate, one important scene was missing in this country, in which Jack Warden takes his friends home for a session of 16mm. pornographic movies. At no time was the screen shown—the camera merely panned over the men's alternately bored and incredulous faces seen in the flickering light of the projector. As there was nothing intrinsically censorable in the visual aspect of the

scene, one might be drawn to the conclusion that the episode was cut not for what the audience in the cinema sees, but for what the characters in the film are seeing!

* * *

With the extensive sale of old films to television, the fireside viewer now has a repertory cinema of his own. Unfortunately, the claims of strict programming both here and in America have exacted their toll in the form of cuts. The general policy of the BBC is not to cut their films, irrespective of length, though there have been a few exceptions. The current batch of RKO pictures are being shown complete, for instance, and even an unusually long film like Capra's *It's a Wonderful Life* was allowed to run its full course of 128 minutes. The commercial channel, with the continual pressure of advertising commitments, is less fortunately placed. The big Saturday night film spot (usually of 105 minutes) includes a feature and about 10 minutes of commercials; consequently many long films have been severely, sometimes clumsily, trimmed to fit the schedule. Notable casualties have been George Stevens' *Talk of the Town* and Huston's *Treasure of Sierra Madre*, originally 117 and 126

minutes respectively. Some of the early establishing scenes went from both films, resulting in confused continuity and character motivation.

The cinema, being at once art, industry and social force, has always been at the mercy of commercial expediency in the West and ideological control in the East. But when the cinema does assume the dignity of an art, a vehement plea must be made for the film-maker's rights as an artist. A book publisher may announce an abridged version of a popular classic, but he would hardly consider releasing a novel without its final chapter or with a few odd passages missing in the middle. Yet regular acts of similar cinematic butchery can be committed without incurring public protest, and seem likely to continue until film authors—writers, producers, directors, composers—are able to obtain some measure of control over their own work (as in France). Public interest, though, can do something to help. If sufficient people are aware of, and protest at, the worst excesses, it will at least prove that a section of the great, docile public has an articulate voice and that some people do care. It is this kind of action, in the long run, that might also strengthen the film-maker's own claim for recognition.



FILM AS ART, by Rudolph Arnheim. Illustrated. (Faber and Faber, 25s.)

"I HAVE NOT tried to bring things up to date either with regard to my own thinking or to the technological progress and the film production of the intervening years."

With this uncompromising statement Mr. Arnheim introduces a version of his *Film*, first published in 1933, and now reprinted in part beside some more recent essays written over the next five years. But nothing here is later than 1938. His book, he says, is a "book of standards", and the essays discuss such topics as the history of moving pictures and such innovations as television and talking films.

In 1933 Mr. Arnheim was on the defensive; he went to great lengths to prove that the film has certain qualities and imposes certain demands on the film-maker which place it on a level with acknowledged arts like painting, drama, and the novel. But today disputes about the right of film to be classed as an art are inclined to be academic, and are more a question of the definition of "art" than of the definition of "film". For this reason much of Mr. Arnheim's patiently accumulated evidence serves only to prove a case that was won long ago.

His refusal to move forward later than 1938 can also be provoking. Anyone who, in 1958, regards the introduction of speech into films as a highly suspect and potentially dangerous innovation, who thinks of colour as an almost lethal addition to the film-maker's tools, and who sees no difference in principle between "the visual action of the theatre and the moving image of the film", runs the risk of being called an eccentric. But it is not so much the parts of Mr. Arnheim's book that wring protests from the reader that are disappointing, as the long passages with which it is impossible to disagree. So much of the book is so impeccably correct that it stifles rather than stimulates thought. A typical paragraph runs:

On the other hand, however, the film artist has a valuable means of expression, which is denied to the stage, in the

power of choosing his distance from his subject. In a theatre the spectator always remains at the same distance from the scene of action, and hence events and objects can only be shown within certain limits of size. The subtleties of facial expression, for instance, are lost for the majority of spectators, who are not seated close to the stage. Indeed unless gifted with very sharp eyes or by making use of the unsatisfactory, because falsifying, assistance of opera glasses, the audience even in the first balcony will be able to catch only a fraction of what is shown on stage.

The book is profusely illustrated with instances from particular films—to show that camera angles may have dramatic significance, how simplicity can be a virtue, how close-ups may be used for more than one purpose. But the cogency of Mr. Arnheim's arguments is weakened by the fact that the sequences he describes belong to films which no one under the age of thirty-five is likely to have seen, and which few people are ever likely to see again. Turning to the later essays the reader faces the same disappointment in his search for stirring ideas. In his essay *A Forecast of Television*, Mr. Arnheim contents himself with such unadventurous phrases as "Television is a new, hard test of our wisdom . . ." It is true; perhaps it was hard to say more; it was certainly impossible to say less.

Mr. Arnheim promised to write a book of standards; but nowhere does he state clearly what his standards are. A sequence is called "impressive", "fine", or "clever", and then mercilessly analysed into its component parts; a great deal is talked about "art", "artistic", and "the artist", but there is no sign that Mr. Arnheim has ever considered whether art is susceptible to the kind of analysis he applies here. What he does in fact give us is a meticulous break-down of the film-maker's *craft*, and by the end of the book we begin to feel that in this world of camera-angles, lighting, close-ups, montage, editing, and all the other crafty devices of the film-maker, there is little room for art.

KENNETH CAVANDER

TO SEE THE DREAM, by Jessamyn West. (Hodder and Stoughton, 16s.)

THIS "INTIMATE JOURNAL" kept by Jessamyn West during the writing and production of William Wyler's *Friendly Persuasion*, adapted from her novel, does little to explain the film's eventual lack of a scenario credit or the statements subsequently made by Michael Wilson, who alleged that the script was substantially his. Indeed, Wilson is not even mentioned in the book, and Miss West indicates that she and Robert Wyler were entirely responsible for the script. (Another writer, whose half-finished script was considered useless, was left to complete it while the new writers started afresh.)

"I would far rather have a good movie which bore very little

relation to the book than a poor movie which faithfully photographed the book," declares Miss West at one point, and this unusually enlightened attitude is borne out in her approach to the adaptation. But the journal is three-quarters musing to one quarter film-making. She reflects on the wind, on colour, on poetry, on Thoreau and on love; and she does it with a sort of twee semi-mysticism which makes it pretty evident that this was an "intimate journal" destined from the start for a wider public.

Nevertheless the book is intermittently rewarding and contains several surprises. Both William and Robert Wyler, for instance, were apparently so infatuated with the terrible sequence featuring Marjorie Main and her three man-eating hill-billy daughters that Miss West could not argue them out of it. William Wyler, who seems to have impressed the author less than his brother, at one point considered Jane Russell for the part eventually played by Dorothy McGuire. Later he tested Miss West's reaction to a script which gave Gary Cooper, the Quaker hero, a thundering climax, virtually winning a battle single-handed but without actually firing a shot. This, he seemed to think, had the advantage of simultaneously satisfying Cooper fans and Quaker principles.

But the principal figure in the book, apart from Miss West herself, is not Wyler but Stuart Millar, who has since produced *The Young Stranger* and *Stage Struck*. He was Wyler's assistant on *Friendly Persuasion*. Despite the author's obvious liking for him, he seems to have had a knack for making enemies which eventually led to his resignation before the film was completed. Twice the impression of smooth, all-round friendliness is punctured, each time at Millar's expense, and each time with a frightening savagery which suggests that Miss West, for all her insight into the forces of nature, may have been something of a Magoo when it came to human relations in Hollywood.

DEREK HILL

Four Novels

THE ACTRESS, by Bessie Breuer. (Cape, 18s.)

THE WALL-TO-WALL TRAP, by Morton Freedgood. (Jarrolds, 15s.)

A SEASON WITH MAMMON, by Martyn Goff. (Putnam, 15s.)

THE HILLS OF BEVERLY, by Libbie Brock. (Cape, 18s.)

THE MOTION PICTURE industry has always exercised an immense fascination for the writer, and there has never been any shortage of novels about the film business—so self-contained a world, and such a wonderfully tight little segment to fling under the microscope. And if a pretence is needed that there is some contact with the world outside, there is always the old standby of art against business, idealism versus the bitch-goddess.

At the moment, we have temporarily exhausted that theme. After all people have been writing about it, and even living it themselves, for a long time, and those works of Nathanael West and Scott Fitzgerald where the problem is implicit seem to speak clearly to us still. None of the four novels under review here (three by American writers) has anything new to say, nor a new way of saying the old thing; but three of them should prove rewarding enough to those interested in the milieu they describe.

Joanna Krask, the "Actress" of Bessie Breuer's book, is a girl who has entered the movie world by accident. The novel follows her early career and loves, until at the age of twenty-nine, reunited with husband number one, she turns her back on Hollywood and decides to become a "real" actress on Broadway. The other men in her life are a handsome young Italian actor with whom she makes a film in Rome and a budding Kazan in Hollywood. The facts of her story are demonstrably the clichés of existence in the international film world, but Miss Breuer writes competently, and if she does not engage us very deeply except in the scenes describing the birth of Joanna's child, still she is seldom less than entertaining. That part of the book which describes the making of a film in a village near Naples is particularly well observed.

With *The Wall-to-Wall Trap* we are back in the familiar big-business world of the American movie industry; the scene is the New York office of a leading film company. Within these sacred walls a tarnished modern morality is being played out, a battle for the soul of the forty-year-old publicity manager of Above All Films, *l'auteur manqué*, the new American type of the introspective extrovert. *En passant* Mr. Freedgood explores various types of bitchery and introduces a few amusing characters: Bobo, the Hollywood director with his own stereotyped private language;

Bridget Bayliss, first lady of the American screen, who spends her Hollywood life in monastic virtue and comes to New York three times a year on wild nymphomaniac sprees; and the illiterate old horror who controls Above All Films:

"'Maybe the word for it is Art,' Billy George said, stirring his feet violently among the Coke bottles, 'but my own word for it is Shite. . . .'"

The author labours his point, and, since this is an American novel, the great mother-figure of the Company wins back her recalcitrant son in the end. But if this is finally just another interim report on the world we recreate every morning, it is a report tempered with sensitivity, observation and a certain individuality.

A Season with Mammon is the only English novel of the batch. It tells the story of a young film journalist's involvement with a tycoon, Ehrndor, one of those shadowy *monstres sacrés* who lurk in the background of film production. Mr. Goff writes with ease and point. If at times one feels that he is leaving too much out, that one needs to know much more about everyone involved, this may merely be that he knows his own characters too well and has neglected to invent where observation needs to be supplemented by imagination. If the tycoon Ehrndor had been pure invention, I feel the writer would have had to explain him finally, or at least explore his psychology more fully. As it is, one is left finally with the feeling that Mr. Goff is covertly admitting: "That's as far as I can fathom him. After that, your guess is as good as mine."

Libbie Brock tells us in an ingenuous foreword to *The Hills of Beverly* that, in writing about the Hollywood she knows so well, she has "freely borrowed a style of writing from the works of such persons as Queen Marguerite of Navarre, the Marquise de Sévigné, the Duke de Saint-Simon and the Abbe Brantôme." She might with equal accuracy have invoked the name of Mrs. Henry Wood, though to be perfectly fair, her remarkable prose style really resembles nothing so much as a high-school girl's diary. Her characters are the big bosses, their wives and mistresses and devoted offiders, all of whom speak the same stilted dialogue (it can't be called speech). Her hero, David Staver, when his wife turns up with another man several hours late and with a cock and bull story about running out of gas, expresses himself as follows:

"How could I possibly blame you for a shortage of gasoline? I cannot even blame Mr. Jackwith, who must have been confused and unthinking on his wedding day. And James, with a long trip behind him and another facing him, how could he be expected to check his fuel tank? . . ."

It is difficult to rouse any interest in the dreary Mr. and Mrs. Staver ("But would you not like to shop for furnishings here in New York? Perhaps we ought to go to Europe to search for some objects of artistic worth.") At the end of this long book—whose moral, incidentally, appears to be that a little virtue is a dangerous thing—one welcomes the Stavers' final reunion with a sigh of relief.

CHARLES OSBORNE

The British Film Industry, 1958

A P.E.P. Publication

This booklet, which brings up-to-date the original P.E.P. report on the film industry published in 1952, is published by Political and Economic Planning at 5s. By special arrangement with P.E.P., the British Film Institute is able to supply a limited number of copies of *The British Film Industry, 1958* to members and associates at the special price of 3s. (3/6 post free).

Available from the Publications Department

BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE
164 SHAFTESBURY AVENUE, W.C.2.

or from the NATIONAL FILM THEATRE

HENRY CORNELIUS AND THE LITTLE GUY

Henry Cornelius began his career in films as an editor working for Alexander Korda. He later worked for some years in South Africa, where he was responsible for a number of war documentaries. At Ealing, he was associate producer on "Hue and Cry" and "It Always Rains on Sunday" and began his career as a feature director with "Passport to Pimlico". Then came "The Galloping Major", "Genevieve", "I Am a Camera" and the as yet unreleased "Next to No Time". He died on May 2nd, aged forty-six.

THERE isn't anything new in the film comedy make-up's preoccupation with The Little Guy. The great film comedians assumed in one form or another the guise of the ordinary little man, inept, hesitant, under-privileged, ever exposed to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune and always emerging from the ordeal, battered but undismayed. The Little Guys as manifested by Charlie Chaplin, Harold Lloyd, Buster Keaton, Laurel and Hardy and Jacques Tati have all been symbols of survival through failure. They have served to prick the world's conscience. They have been lovable, pitiful, but admirable only in their indestructibility. The concept of The Little Guy has been generally a sentimental one, and one to remind us that he is less fortunate than ourselves and that we should be kind to him. Once I found myself in a cinema sitting, by chance, next to the wife of one of the greatest political figures of our time. The film was Jacques Tati's *Jour de Fête*: "Oh dear!" she exclaimed happily to her companion at the end of the film. "Isn't he a clumsy man?"

Henry Cornelius' preoccupation with The Little Guy reveals a more positive attitude and his comedies contain a less palliative and a more urgent message to The Little Guy himself: "Wake up you mutt!" they say. "Wake up to yourself. Don't just stand around there being laughed at and being pitied. Do something." In *Passport to Pimlico*, his first film, his approach was broad: he dealt with a group of Little Guys, and in his second comedy, *The Galloping Major*, he continued his examination of the grey Admass as a group.

Then, as he became more confident as a director, he began to examine his characters more searchingly. Before embarking on *Genevieve*, his most successful film, he got an idea for a comedy called *The Little Four* on which he worked with Roger MacDougall, but although the script was produced, it was, alas, shelved and it is a great pity that he was never given the opportunity of going on with it. It was the story of four Little Guys who, impatient of the failure of the Big Guys to reach agreement, decided to have a Summit Meeting of their own. Just before his death, stimulated by the British Film Institute's search for the script best serving the interests of peace, he was anxious to take *The Little Four* down from its shelf and start to work on it again. As ever, fiction was being overtaken by fact: The Big Guys, arguing around and around the proposals for a talk at the Summit, made Cornelius' fantasy nothing if not topical!

Only in his last film, *Next to No Time*, has Cornelius attempted to select one Little Guy for a detailed examination. He completed this shortly before his unexpected and tragically early death. Those of us who worked closely with him on it know how intensely personal, of all his films, this was to Corny. A man of acute introspection and self-examination, he identified himself closely with The Little Guy in the story. This identification, I hasten to add, was of a symbolic nature. The character in the film, played by Kenneth More, is a planning engineer in a large factory who finds a difficulty in convincing his employers of his ability. "I know I've got it in me" the character says in effect, "but when it comes to putting myself over to people, I don't know how to do it." In the course of the story, The Little Guy learns how to do it, and becomes a Big Guy. Remembering his own early struggles to convince people of his ability, studying his own development as a man, ever grateful for the success which his ability and determination attained, Cornelius had a passionate belief that his new film, for all its trappings of comedy, would give help and encouragement to the millions of Little Guys who would be given an opportunity to see it. This perhaps serves best to illustrate his overall attitude towards film-making. From boyhood, he saw the medium as a means of disseminating ideas. And the idea that seemed most to excite him is that in our world, The Big Guy is only The Little Guy who has crossed the rubicon by his belief in himself. His death robs the British cinema of its most serious comedy maker.

MONJA DANISCHEWSKY

Correspondence

The Picasso Mystery

The Editor, SIGHT AND SOUND

SIR,—Mr. Berger's Socialist principles, sincere though they may be, have obviously been applied to his "Clouzot as Delilah" criticism *merely for their own sake*; rather than simply viewing the picture as a Socialist, he has used the film as a vehicle for his pronouncements against "20th century monopoly capitalism" and in so doing has had to misrepresent and distort—in fact he has divorced the film from its true purpose as shamefully as he says Picasso is divorced from his product.

The most vehement objection seems to be that Picasso, the man, should be shown to us in more detail than Picasso, the work. Apart from the fact that to screen a series of finished paintings is a waste of cinematic expression (the *movie*, remember?), surely he misses the intention of the film? It is perfectly natural for those interested in the work of art to be also curious about its creator. Now we know that the balance is often too heavily weighted on the wrong side, and the creator becomes, as Mr. Berger says, only a personality, but this is surely no justification for the opinion that the man is completely unimportant—why should we not honour a man whose work we admire? To say that we should not bother with what is in the genius's mind when he is working is ridiculous. Where does his work come from? What is it? And why then complain that we are "given no clue as to why Picasso constantly corrects and changes", when you are asserting that "the only important thing . . . is the *explicit* work which is the result of his working?"

The Picasso Mystery presupposes an interest in the work, and it sets out to introduce us to the man who produces this work—a perfectly reasonable purpose. Mr. Berger asks, "What significance does the film have in relation to the life?" Its significance is that it is about him working—not just living.

Yours faithfully,

PATRICIA A. SKINNER.

108 Trelawney Road,
Barkingside,
Ilford, Essex.

Technical Criticism

SIR,—We would like to make a number of points in reply to Mr. Arthur Jacobs' criticism of the British Film Academy's book *The Technique of Film Music*.

Before replying to Mr. Jacobs, we would like to make it clear that *The Technique of Film Music* is not by any means solely our own work. A Committee set up by the Academy under the Chairmanship of William Alwyn supervised both the planning and the writing of the book, and members of the Committee wrote chapters or sections of it which are credited in the note following the Introduction on page 10; for example, Ken Cameron wrote the section on the practice of sound recording and Muir Mathieson the description of the work of the Music Director. In addition, wherever possible the detailed discussion of examples of composition for films was undertaken with the advice and help of the composers concerned. This is why the credit on the cover of the book reads "Written and Compiled by Roger Manvell and John Huntley for the British Film Academy" and not simply "by" us as appeared at the head of the review.

Mr. Jacobs complains that the book is poorly produced, has too narrow margins, uses bad typography, has no running heads, uses shiny paper and is too expensive. Actually it follows the exact pattern of Karel Reisz's celebrated book in the same series *The Technique of Film Editing* (originally published in 1953) over which, to the best of our recollection, there have been no such complaints. The margins are the same as for *SIGHT AND SOUND*, which seem to us adequate for a smaller page area, and the type is Times New Roman, which is one of the better standard type faces. The paper for all these technical books has to be gloss-surfaced (again like *SIGHT AND SOUND*) to reproduce satisfactorily the innumerable inset illustrations. Mr. Jacobs claims that the musical illustrations are inserted "unsatisfactorily" in the book

without saying why. Where else could they come except in the section to which they belong? It is only too true that the price is higher (42/- against 30/-), but this reflects the rising costs over the past 5 years.

Mr. Jacobs complains about the indexing, cross-referencing and, in certain specific cases, the proof-reading. The book is made up of text (210 pages) and some 80 pages of reference material representing, at a modest estimate, some 4000 items of factual information. To have included any or all of this reference material in the book's general index, however desirable this might be on the grounds of making it encyclopaedic, would have increased our index from over six double-columned pages to an intolerable and unwieldy length. In any case, we specifically state at the head of the index that it covers only the main body of the text.

We would like to comment on some of the points of fact queried by Mr. Jacobs. Our authority for referring to the banning of the music of Meisel's score for *The Battleship Potemkin* is Kurt London's book *Film Music*, page 93; the reference to Alfred Newman's work in *Call Me Madam* on page 224 related to the American Academy Award which was given him for his score for the film, and not to the songs of Irving Berlin—we regret if we were not specific enough here; the list of "items" in *Fantasia* (presumably Mr. Jacobs refers to page 217) is in fact a selected list of composers—we regret the omission of Tchaikovsky from among them.

Mr. Jacobs complains rightly about certain errors in the final proof-reading; he instances three. To our knowledge there are at least twelve. The lay-out and the proofing of the book gave the publishers and the writers exceptional problems, and led to the work of production being spread over some five months. We look forward to putting any errors we discover right in the second edition. We shall be grateful to all our readers who will help us in tracing them.

British Film Academy,
60 Queen Anne Street,
W.1.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER MANVELL.
JOHN HUNTLEY.

SIR,—Congratulations on the very interesting "Conversation with Roger Edens" in the Spring issue. May we have some more features on similar lines—that is, nostalgic but informative reminiscences from people who help to make the movies? The article did, however, contain a couple of errors. *Broadway Melody of 1936* was not M-G-M's "most successful musical since the coming of talkies", nor was it the first *Broadway Melody*. Both these distinctions belong to the original *Broadway Melody* of 1929 which grossed, I believe, over 3 million dollars. Also, Eleanor Powell made her film debut in *George White's Scandals* (1935), not in *Broadway Melody of 1936*.

A personal grumble: must SIGHT AND SOUND be so sombre? Surely the magazine can do without the depressing, coffin-like formats which encase most of the regular features—the Film Reviews, In the Picture, etc.—and the thick black lines that denote the end of an article. The photographs, too, rarely depict happy people. In the Spring Number, only Melina Mercouri and the late Jean Harlow (and her attendant chorines) look really pleased to be gracing such distinguished pages. We know the movie industry is having a tough time, but there is no need for SIGHT AND SOUND to go into mourning yet!

Yours faithfully,
KENNETH SCRUTTON.
329 Fleetwood Road,
Cleveleys, Lancs.

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

SIR,—In case you have not already been informed of it, you may care to know of an interesting development in the field of documentary.

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, whose activities against the use of the H-bomb are well known, has set up its own film unit to publicise its cause. This is being run by a strong committee of film and TV people, including such names as Anthony Asquith (President) Derrick Knight (secretary), Malleon, Mankowitz, Rotha, Tynan, Milligan, Wright and Dehn. Their first film was the Aldermaston March, and this is already in the can.

It will be interesting to see their treatment of this remarkable event, after the rather scrappy and technically poor coverage it got from the newsreels.

Yours faithfully,
A. LODGE.
31 Swanley Lane,
Swanley, Kent.

Chaplin Reissues

SIR,—I should like to draw attention to the deplorable copies of Chaplin's *Shoulder Arms* and *The Pilgrim*, both of which have been recently reissued by D.U.K.Films.

Shoulder Arms is, in the first place, incomplete—the celebrated 'Charlie-tree' episode being a notable omission. Worse, however, is the quite arbitrary insertion of a sequence from *A Day's Pleasure* during the course of the picture. The case of *The Pilgrim* is even more deplorable. The print of this begins with what appears to be a complete version of *The Adventurer*, made some years earlier. Neither film bore a title apologising for incompleteness, nor for the fact that material from other Chaplin films had been inserted within them . . .

Yours faithfully,
DAVID G. MOORE.

63 Chester Road,
Highgate, N.19.

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INTERVIEW WITH CARL FOREMAN

Continued from page 223

long as the theme is still told properly. I think it's a mistake to give the actors or the director the burden of changing dialogue during shooting. They have other problems—and they don't have to prove what you set out to prove.

Have you ever written for the stage?

Only before I came into films. I spent most of my college days at the University of Illinois, where I was always very much involved in campus theatricals, and then after leaving school I was involved with so-called Little Theatre productions. But the movies always fascinated me. I think it's because my generation is the basic movie generation. We grew up with the movies; it's our theatre; it's our mass art. By and large, we should have inherited the industry by now. The problem has always been that the Titans, the pioneers, never wanted to let go. From time to time they would bring in people who theoretically would be Crown Princes, but they destroyed them as fast as they brought them in. So you have in America an industry in which most of the pioneers have died, but a few are still hanging on. Their philosophy always was *après moi la délugé*; and now they've had their bloody deluge. They asked for it: they never had faith in their own industry, even looked at on their own terms, purely and simply as an industry. And this is the great tragedy, because the transition from industry to art could have been made. I think that it's going to be made now, perhaps in spite of them, to

meet the world as it is today. Because the world is not what they thought it was. Actually, it never was. . . .

You've worked mainly as an independent. Do you think this is the most satisfactory way to make pictures?

Yes, but you know conditions have changed so much in recent years. I'd like to feel that one good result of what's happened throughout the world industry, and certainly in America, is the trend towards independent production financed by the major studios. I think that the satisfactions and rewards lie in independent production. And the challenge will be faced by the kind of pictures that independent producers will have to make.

. . . . I've always felt that pictures were over-sold, so that in many ways the audience is like an old roué. People—the public—are worn out, and how are you going to titillate them now, when you've used up your diamond-studded whips and everything else? It may be an over-simplification, but I do feel that the challenge is to widen the field of content, which has really been very narrow on the whole. I think we will attract a larger audience again when that audience feels that we have something to offer them, when we come closer to being an art form rather than an industry. When they feel that we can give them the answers, or the stimulation, or the inspiration, or whatever it is they expect from an art form, I think we'll get them back if we've lost them and we'll get new audiences as they come along. And God knows we've got the means to do it.

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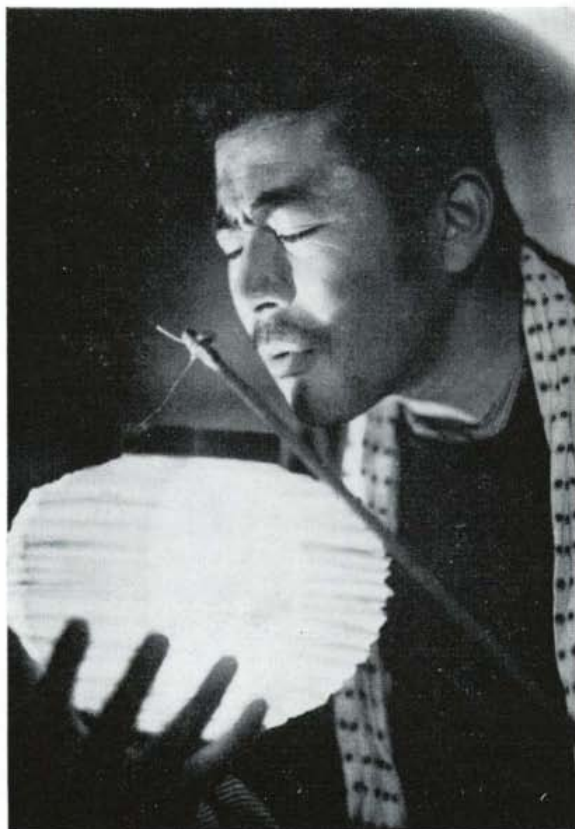
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A GUIDE TO CURRENT FILMS

Films likely to be of special interest to *SIGHT AND SOUND* readers are denoted by one, two or three stars.

***AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS** (*United Artists*) Mike Todd's "show" remains a film like any other—but twice as long as most. Good performances by David Niven and Cantinflas and exotic guest appearances help pass the time. (Director, Michael Anderson. Cinestage, Eastman Colour.)

BIG MONEY, THE (*Rank*) Originally announced as shelved by the Rank Organisation, this comedy concerns a family of petty criminals and the son's efforts to go crooked. More farce than *comédie noire*. (Ian Carmichael, Robert Helpmann, Belinda Lee; director, John Paddy Carstairs. VistaVision, Technicolor.)

BROTHERS KARAMAZOV, THE (*M-G-M*) Richard Brooks' attempt to cut Dostoevski down to the size of a 150 minute 'epic', with atmosphere owing more to Culver City than 19th century Russia. A case of a film sinking under the weight of its subject. (Yul Brynner, Maria Schell, Claire Bloom. Metrocolor.)

DRACULA (*Rank*) Bram Stoker's classic story reworked in a polished but unatmospheric recital of the horror repertoire—vampires in black cloaks, stakes driven through bleeding hearts, and Count Dracula decomposing in a shaft of sunlight. (Peter Cushing, Michael Gough, Christopher Lee; director, Terence Fisher. Technicolor.)

FORT DOBBS (*Warners*) Traditional Western concerned with a small, ill-assorted party's journey through hostile Indian country. Mostly just one skirmish after another. (Clint Walker, Virginia Mayo, Brian Keith; director, Gordon Douglas.)

FRAULEIN (*Fox*) Slightly over-sweet love story set in Germany immediately after the war. Pleasant playing by Dana Wynter; distinctly ingenuous view of the post-war German situation. (Mel Ferrer; director, Henry Koster. CinemaScope, Eastman Colour.)

***FUGITIVE IN SAIGON** (*Rank*) Marcel Camus' first film is chiefly distinguished by the photography of Edmond Séchan. The story (moral transformation of a young Frenchman in Indo-China) is weak, and the film attacks many problems without doing justice to them; nevertheless, it is worth seeing. *Reviewed.* (Daniel Gelin, Anh Machard.)

HEART OF A CHILD (*Rank*) Austrian boy, ill-treated by his father, runs away with his St. Bernard to save the dog from being sold to a butcher. A happy ending for young audiences is provided. (Donald Pleasence, Jean Anderson, Richard Williams; director, Clive Donner.)

HEAVEN FELL THAT NIGHT (*Columbia*) Stephen Boyd as a Spanish peasant on the run in the company of Brigitte Bardot. In his third film, Roger Vadim has compromised once too often. (Alida Valli. CinemaScope, Eastman Colour.)

***HOT SPELL** (*Paramount*) Characteristically compelling performance by Shirley Booth in adaptation of another American play about family tensions. Some well-observed scenes and a fairly spirited comment on American mother-worship. *Reviewed.* (Anthony Quinn, Shirley MacLaine; director, Daniel Mann. VistaVision.)

****KANAL** (*Contemporary*) Sombre, obsessive, extremely impressive requiem on the Warsaw uprising. This second film by Andrzej Wajda, though more consciously symbolic than *A Generation*, confirms his position as one of Poland's outstanding new talents. (Tadeusz Janczar, Teresa Isewka.)

***KEY, THE** (*Columbia*) Carol Reed and Carl Foreman have collaborated to make an ambitious, uneven production about tug-boat captains on war service and the girl who becomes a symbol in their lives. *Reviewed.* (William Holden, Sophia Loren, Trevor Howard. CinemaScope.)

***LONG, HOT SUMMER, THE** (*Fox*) Curious amalgam of bits and pieces from William Faulkner, with Orson Welles as the tyrant of Frenchman's Bend and Joanne Woodward and Anthony Franciosa as his rebellious children. Repeated shifts of mood culminate in a wild happy ending, but the acting is good and the detail lively. (Paul Newman; director, Martin Ritt. CinemaScope, Eastman Colour.)

MAN HUNT (*Fox*) Honest young Westerner, hunted by a vengeful ranch-owner and his family, wins through in final gunfight. A plain and straightforward Western based on a novel (*The Road to Socorro*) with rather more pretensions to style. (Don Murray, Diane Varsi; director, Henry Hathaway. CinemaScope, Eastman Colour.)

MARJORIE MORNINGSTAR (*Warners*) Adaptation of Herman Wouk's sprawling best-seller about a Jewish girl's involvement with a slightly bogus man of the theatre. Smoothly done, as a bitter-sweet romance, and not without intriguing sociological overtones. (Gene Kelly, Natalie Wood, Claire Trevor; director, Irving Rapper. Warnercolor.)

MERRY ANDREW (*M-G-M*) Danny Kaye gives up school-mastering for the circus in a story rather under-directed by Michael Kidd. Kaye's charm is fully exploited and there are some pleasant numbers. *Reviewed.* (Pier Angeli, Baccaloni. CinemaScope, Metrocolor.)

NO TIME FOR SERGEANTS (*Warners*) Comedy about a naive young hill-billy's disruptive effect on the U.S. Air Force. Closely adapted from the stage, the film works conscientiously though the range of barrack-room jokes. (Andy Griffith, Nick Adams; director, Mervyn LeRoy.)

QUESTION OF ADULTERY, A (*Eros*) Catchpenny adaptation of Dan Sutherland's play *Breach of Marriage*, itself a far from subtle investigation of the case for artificial insemination. Made by the producer and director of *The Flesh is Weak*, with no less of an eye to the sensation market. (Julie London, Anthony Steel, Basil Sydney; director, Don Chaffey.)

***RAINTREE COUNTY** (*M-G-M*) 160-minute account of a North-South marriage at the time of the American Civil War. With battle pieces, folk lore, a mad mother in the background and Elizabeth Taylor drowning in a swamp to enliven it, it is still heavy going. (Montgomery Clift, Eva Marie Saint, Nigel Patrick; director, Edward Dmytryk. M.G.M. Camera 65, Technicolor.)

RUN SILENT, RUN DEEP (*United Artists*) Hecht-Hill-Lancaster production about a submarine on a Pacific mission and the conflict between Commander (Clark Gable) who knows what he is doing and Lieutenant (Burt Lancaster) who is not so sure. Action stuff well done, but the human side is strangely familiar. (Director, Robert Wise.)

ST. LOUIS BLUES (*Paramount*) Biography of blues composer William C. Handy, from the time when he plays hymns in his father's church to the night *St. Louis Blues* gets a symphonic performance. Striking appearances by Eartha Kitt and Pearl Bailey. (Nat 'King' Cole; director, Allen Reisner. VistaVision.)

SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD, THE (*Cinerama Productions*) Another large-screen world tour, taking in the sights of Greece, Japan, India, etc. Travel via Cinerama is losing some of its novelty value, and the new instalment carries excess baggage in the form of Lowell Thomas's deadening commentary. (Various directors. Technicolor.)

SHE DIDN'T SAY NO (*A.B.-Pathé*) British view of Ireland—where illegitimacy is a joke and the village unmarried mother is made respectable by mistake. Treatment very coy; humour mainly misplaced. (Eileen Herlie, Perlita Neilson, Niall MacGinnis; director, Cyril Frankel. Technicolor.)

SOUTH PACIFIC (*Fox*) High, wide and generally unhandsome Todd-AO version of stage success, stodgily directed by Joshua Logan. Happily the songs survive from a welter of weird colour effects and jungle decor. *Reviewed.* (Rossano Brazzi, Mitzi Gaynor, John Kerr. Technicolor.)

***STREET OF SHAME** (*Gala*) Mizoguchi's last film, set in a Tokyo brothel, traces the unhappy lives of half-a-dozen prostitutes. Sober observation and sharp social awareness, handicapped by a poor script and some unwelcome electronic sound effects. (Machiko Kyo, Michiyo Kogore.)

TEN COMMANDMENTS, THE (*Paramount*) De Mille's second film of this title is more monumental than spectacular. The tone ranges from heavy reverence to Hollywood fantasy; Charlton Heston is beefy as Moses; H. B. Warner and Henry Wilcoxon yield a little nostalgia. (Anne Baxter, Yvonne de Carlo. VistaVision, Technicolor.)

***TEN NORTH FREDERICK** (*Fox*) Bowdlerised, intermittently thoughtful adaptation of John O'Hara's novel of seamy American politics and sex. Characterless handling is countered by some good playing from Suzy Parker, Diane Varsi and Tom Tully. (Gary Cooper; director, Philip Dunne. CinemaScope.)

THERE'S ALWAYS A PRICE TAG (*Rank*) James Hadley Chase thriller about a young chauffeur embroiled in the murder of an alcoholic financier. Twisty and not very edifying addition to the current French crime cycle. (Daniel Gélín, Michèle Morgan; director, Denys de la Patellière.)

***WHEN THE DEVIL DRIVES** (*Cross-Channel*) Roger Vadim's second film deals with the attempts of a young girl to escape from a milieu of moral corruption. Excellent camerawork (Venice in winter), clever direction, but the plot is hardly adequate to carry the theme. (Françoise Arnoul, Christian Marquand. CinemaScope, Eastman Colour.)

WIND CANNOT READ, THE (*Rank*) Romance between English pilot and Japanese teacher set against a background of wartime India; the girl dies of a brain disease after marrying the Englishman in secret. Leisurely and calculated to shock no-one. (Dirk Bogarde, Yoko Tani; director, Ralph Thomas. Eastman Colour.)

WINDJAMMER (*Rank*) Elaborate travelogue in Cinemiracle, the latest wide screen process, following the 18,000 mile voyage of a three masted rigger and taking in 14 ports of call. Plenty of seascapes but hardly enough ideas to keep the screen filled. (Directors, Louis de Rochemont III, and Bill Colleran. Eastman Colour.)

WONDERFUL THINGS (*A.B.-Pathé*) Frankie Vaughan as a singing Gibraltar fisherman who deserts his girl friend for London and a bored but rich socialite. Ingenuous, innocuous and rather old-world. (Jeremy Spenser, Jackie Lane; director, Herbert Wilcox.)

***YOUNG LIONS, THE** (*Fox*) Irwin Shaw's war novel has been reworked so that the central character is now a Nazi with a conscience. With home front episodes in Germany, Britain and America, fighting in two continents, etc., the film virtually provides three standard war stories for the price of one. *Reviewed.* (Marlon Brando, Montgomery Clift, Dean Martin; director, Edward Dmytryk. CinemaScope.)

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